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Def Jam ICON

PRIMA OFFICIAL GAME GUIDE

Written By
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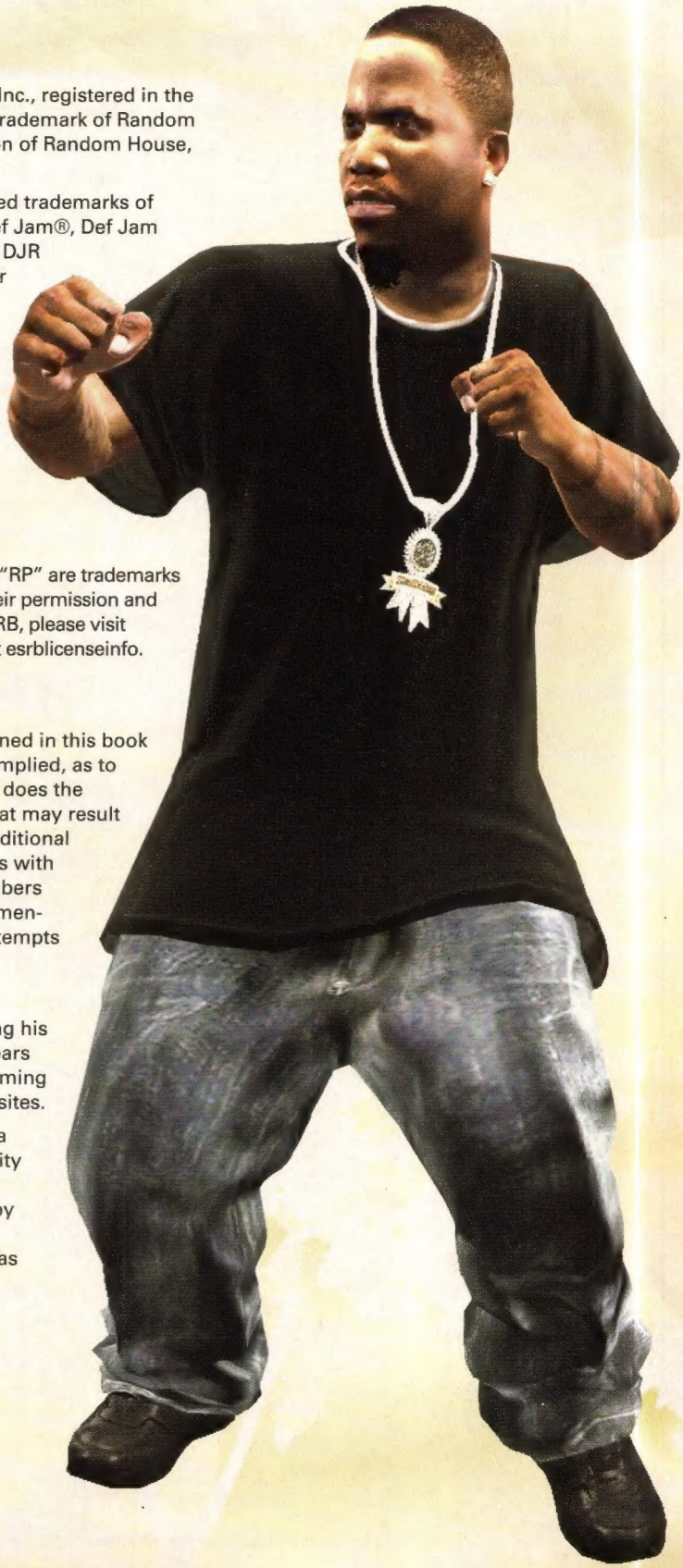

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About the Author

Fernando "Red Star" Bueno has been a gamer since opening his first Atari, and has been writing creatively since his early years in high school. During college he combined his loves for gaming and writing and began freelancing for popular gaming websites.

The San Diego native found his way to Northern California shortly after high school. After graduating from the University of California, Davis, with a dual degree in English and Art History, he was able to land a job as an editor for Prima Games. Though happy with his position as an editor, his life called him to Las Vegas where he now resides. During the move to Nevada, he also made the move to author and has since written a number of game books.

We want to hear from you! E-mail comments and feedback to fbueno@primagames.com.

ISBN: 978-07615-5624-4

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2007921608

Printed in the United States of America

07 08 09 10 GG 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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SHOUT OUT!

Yo! First, I gotta give big ups to my peeps. Thanks to my fiancée, Leslie. Even when I was gettin' my butt handed to me, she made me feel unbeatable. I wouldn't be able to hold it down without my crew, Todd, Alaina, and Cass; they're stand-up peeps, real talk. And finally, huge ups to Michael Mendheim and the crew at EA. Without any of them, this book doesn't happen, ya' heard?

INTRODUCTION

ICONIC

You fulfilled your vendetta and fought to be the king of NYC. You held it down for your hood and fought for your respect. Now the stakes are high. You ain't fighting to get revenge or keep a stranglehold on the underground, now you're fighting to be an Icon—to rise above the underground and become a true playa'.

In *DEF JAM: ICON*, you gotta fight to make your name, make your fortune, and eventually make yourself a real hip-hop mogul. The road between you and multi-platinum records ain't gonna be easy. Plenty of haters are lookin' to take you down and take your place.

DEF JAM REMIXED

So what's new? Aside from its new, sleek artistic look, *DEF JAM: ICON* takes the Def Jam series in a new direction. It's about the music. The Def Jam series has always been known for dope beats and hot joints, but this time your fight depends on them.

As you slug it out, each brawler has his own song. Consider it theme music. When either brawler's song hits specific beats, the fighting venue reacts by unleashing environmental hazards capable of dealing extreme damage. You gotta be sure that you're either out of the way or you're sending the other brawler into the hazard. We'll give you the heads-up on every venue, song, and hazard.

INTERLUDE, 411, WARNING

As you rise from street brawler to shot-caller, you need to make wise decisions. You ain't gonna go nowhere if you're still living like a scrub. Interlude, 411, and Warning boxes are scattered about the following pages. Pay close attention to them; they're packed with valuable information to help you in your meteoric rise.

INTERLUDE

Just like interludes drop short musical bits into longer pieces of music, Interlude boxes drop tips that help you make better decisions. These boxes often contain gems of wisdom, so listen up and listen good.

411

If you see a 411 box, consider stopping to see what's up. These boxes contain notes about the game, this book, or something else interesting. If knowledge is power, then 411 boxes can make you a superman.

WARNING

Warning boxes are probably the most important boxes you come across. They alert you to something that can cause you trouble or drop you like a bad beat. These caution boxes spit mad wisdom meant to keep you from going six feet under, so stop and listen up!

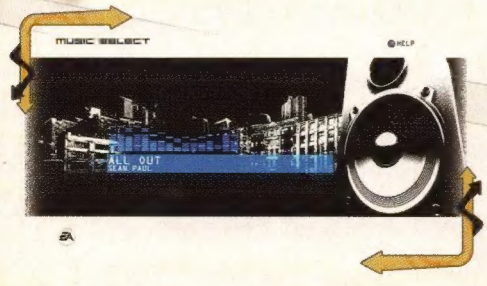
MODE FLAVAS

THROW DOWN

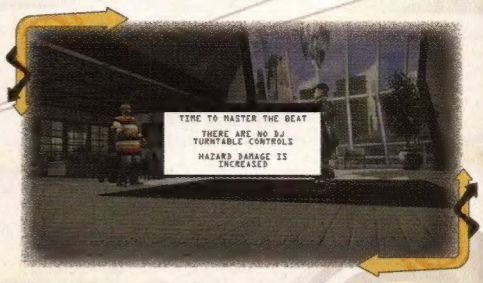
Sometimes you just want to throw down. If so, this should be your first stop. Roll up your sleeves, put on some durable kicks, and get ready to scrap. You have limited options in Throw Down Mode, but making the right choices will make this throw down the most enjoyable.

Begin by either choosing to go at it solo or versus one of your friends. Then choose which two scrappers will throw down, and continue. Select a venue for your brawl and then songs for each fighter. Bam! You're set, young buck. Now take it to the other fighter and be the last man standing.

BEATINGS WITH BASS



Beatings with Bass Mode is a lot like Throw Down Mode. The main differences are that the hazard damage is increased, DJ Turntable controls are disabled, and there is only one song playing in the background, as opposed to each fighter having his own backbeat.



The reasons for the changes are simple, youngblood. If you have only one song playing in the background and no DJ Turntable controls to mix it up, you gotta master that particular beat. Consider this a practice mode, where you perfect fighting to a particular joint.

INTERLUDE

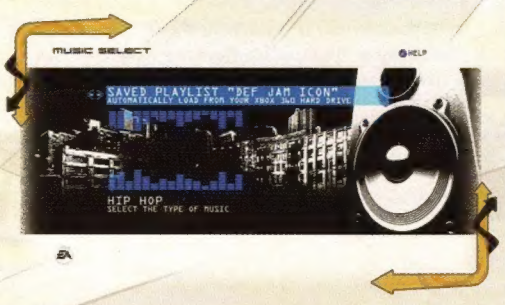
Check it! To really master a beat, use that song in every venue. That way you can know exactly when each environmental hazard is going to be triggered.

PRACTICE MODE

What you need to know? This is Practice Mode. Come here to practice your technique, different fighting styles, and even fighting to different beats. In Practice Mode you can't get knocked out, so go all out. Better still, at the top of the screen is a detailed description of every button you press, so you can see which attacks and combos work for you and which ones you need to gutter.

Use the Pause Menu in Practice Mode to make changes as you see fit. Change your opponent's difficulty level and aggression level, and reset the venue to get as much experience as possible. You wouldn't cut a deal for a record without having listened to a demo first, right? So why would you go into a brawl without first sampling and testing out different styles and venues?

MY SOUNDTRACK (ONLY ON XBOX 360)

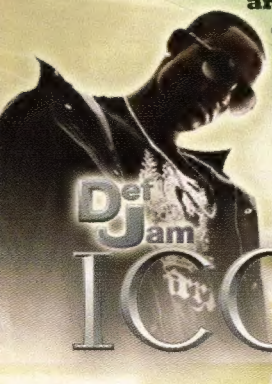


By far one of the sickest modes in any game, My Soundtrack Mode lets you stray from the game's soundtrack and play with your own custom soundtrack. Yeah that's why it's called My Soundtrack. To take advantage of My Soundtrack Mode, first download music tracks to your Xbox 360's hard drive.

Once that is done, select My Soundtrack Mode and proceed as you normally would. This time, though, instead of choosing songs from the game, you're presented with an option to choose either individual tracks or entire playlists. Get creative! It's your world, ya' heard?

INTERLUDE

To make things even easier for yourself, create a playlist named *DEF JAM: ICON* playlist, and load it with your favorite joints and backbeats. Then all you have to do is choose that playlist in the My Soundtrack options and you're good to go!



For more detailed instructions, just peep the lists below:

Individual Tracks Anywhere In Game

1. Press the Xbox Guide Button.
2. Scroll through the list of options and choose Select Music.
3. Select a Music Source: from here you can select the Xbox 360 Hard Drive or a USB MP3 device that you have plugged in.
4. Search through the device to find a song or playlist. Selecting to "Play All" will play the songs one after another.
5. Select the song or playlist.
6. Once you hear the music playing, back out of the Xbox 360 guide and return to game.
7. Your music will now drive the environment.

The instructions above won't work for Xbox Live—your music will play, but the hazards will go to the music that was selected in-game.

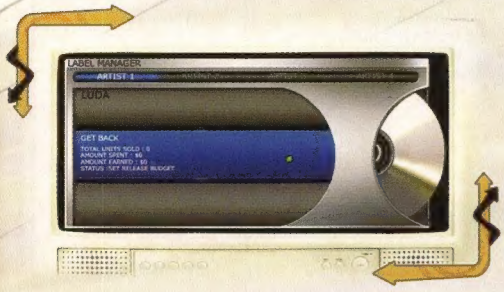
Follow the instructions below for setting up custom playlists.

Saved Playlist "Def Jam Icon"

1. Go to the Xbox 360 Dashboard.
2. Navigate to the Media Blade.
3. Select Music.
4. Select the Xbox 360 Hard Drive— only music that is on the Xbox 360 Hard Drive can be saved to an Xbox 360 Saved Playlist.
5. Search through the Xbox 360 Hard Drive in order to find the songs or albums you want.
6. When you have a song or album, select "Add to Current Playlist."
7. After your playlist is created: select "Edit or Save Playlist."
8. Select "Save Playlist."
9. Type in "Def Jam Icon."
10. Press Start to indicate that you are done.
11. Return to the Main Dashboard.
12. Select Play Game with *DEF JAM: ICON* in the console.
13. On the Main Menu of the game, select My Soundtrack.
14. On the Music Select screen, toggle to Saved Playlist "Def Jam Icon."
15. Select the EQ setting that best fits the music.
16. Enter game.

Just so you know, performing a DJ Song Switch will change to the next song in the playlist.

BUILD A LABEL



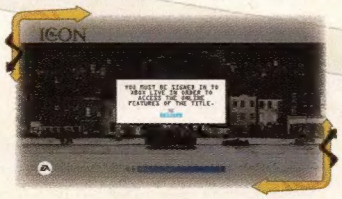
Build a Label Mode is the reason you're playing the game. In it, you go through the trials and tribulations of rising above the streets and attaining the highest honors hip-hop has to offer. The road to super-stardom may be paved by the broken dreams of would-be artists, but at the end it's all platinum, baby!

As you rise to greatness, you'll have to sign artists, manage their record releases, support your crew, rep your label, and basically build a music label. You just gotta make the right decisions, handle your business, and blast past any busta' who gets in your way.

INTERLUDE

No need to trip. Just skip to the "Brawler's Playgrounds" chapter for details on Build a Label Mode. We got your back!

ONLINE MODE



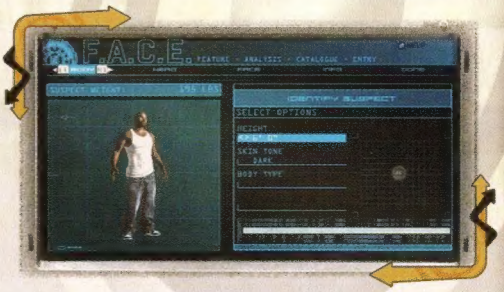
You think you got what it takes to reach the top of the charts? How about the top of the online charts and leaderboards? Yeah, that's a whole different story, ain't it? To climb the charts, you need a broadband connection, a membership that allows online play (if required by your console), and skills that pay the bills.

Before heading out into the virtual venue of your choice, drop in on Practice Mode to be sure you got a fighting chance. Aside from that, peep the combos and brawling strategy in this book for tips on how to dominate online. Once you're ready, fire up your console, get in your most fly gear, and whup some A.

411

Don't trip! Online Mode is Xbox Live Mode on your Xbox 360. Just select Xbox Live in the Main Menu and you're good to go.

F.A.C.E. (FEATURE ANALYSIS CATALOGUE ENTRY)



F.A.C.E. Mode is not a mode in the same sense that Throw Down is a mode. F.A.C.E. is more like a tool. With it you can create several suspects for online play, Throw Down matches, or any other mode aside from Build a Label Mode.

Choose the F.A.C.E. tool to start creating your suspect. First pick an appropriate name. Remember, this will be his name for good, so make sure it fits. After you got a good name down, change the following attributes to make your unusual suspect.

Body

Height: 5'7"–6'7"

Skin Tone: Fair, Olive, Tan, Dark, Darker

Body Type

Head

Skull Profile	Nose Profile
Skull Front	Lips
Eyes	Jaw/Mouth
Nose Front	Cheeks/Chin

Face

Eye Color: Green, Hazel, Light Brown, Aqua, Blue, Dark Brown

Hairstyle: Bald, Curly Short, Short Afro, Medium Afro, Medium Curly, Frohawk, Long Afro, Long Loose Afro, Afro Dreads, Mini Dreads, Tied Dreads, Thin Dreads, Long Rows, Spiral Rows, Straight Rows, Fat Rows, Five Rows, Vine Rows, Faux Hawk, Messy Ivy League, Wave Fade, Wave, Short Fade, Short Wave Fade, Short Wave, #2 Guard Fade, Clippers No Guard, Long Buzz

Hair Color: Black, Dark Brown, Light Brown, Blonde, Red

Eyebrow Style: Natural, Full Natural, Full, Wooly, Styled Wooly, Wooly Curve, Full Curve, Styled Curve, Styled, Thick Brow, Shaped

Facial Hair: None, Full Beard, Styled Full Beard, Full Chin Beard, Thin Chin Beard, Chin Strap, Stylized Goatee, Round Goatee, Full Goatee, Standard Goatee, Thin Goatee, Burnstache, Full Mustache, Thin Mustache, Stylized Scruff, Styled Scruff, Wide Scruff, Thin Scruff, Mosaic Scruff, J Burns, L Burns, Long Burns, Pointed Burns, Short Burns, Zic Zac Burns, Long Patch, Short Patch, Thin Spaniard, Full Spaniard, Wide Spaniard, Spaniard Goatee

Facial Hair Color: Black, Dark Brown, Light Brown, Blonde, Red

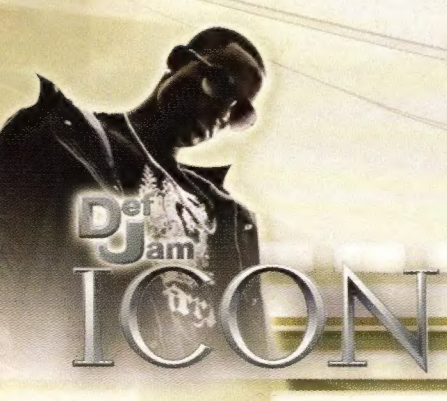
Info

First Name: Eight-character limit

Last Name: Eight-character limit

Fighting Style: Ghetto Blaster, Street Kwon Do, Beatboxer, Black Panther, Muay Fly, Jah Breaka

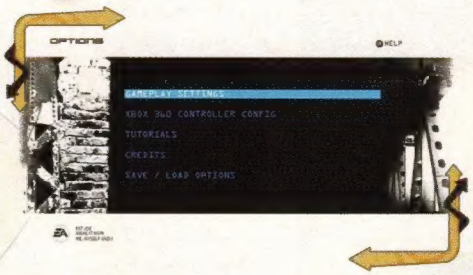
Fight Song: Any of the unlocked songs

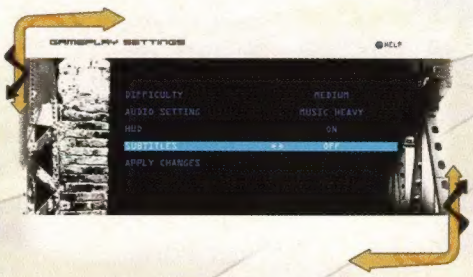


411

The fighting style and song choices will vary based on what you've unlocked. If you want something that isn't on the list, get to it in Build a Label Mode!

OPTIONS





What game would be complete without options? Though it's pretty self-explanatory, the Options Menu is still worthy of some extra attention. After all, it's the one menu that allows you to customize your gaming experience.

You wouldn't pop in your favorite CD without first kickin' up the bass with the equalizer, and you shouldn't throw down without first messin' with the options.

Gameplay Settings

Difficulty: Easy, Medium, Hard

Audio Setting: Music Heavy, Speech Heavy, SFX Heavy

HUD: On or Off

Subtitles: On or Off

INTERLUDE

When choosing options that make long-lasting changes, remember to lock in your choices by selecting Apply Changes before exiting the Options Menu.

INTERLUDE

There is no shame in selecting a lower difficulty setting. Everyone has to start somewhere. If the Medium or Hard settings prove to be more trouble than you can handle, hone your skills in the Easy setting before kickin' it up a notch.

Control Config

Basic Controls

Directional Attacks

Grab Attacks

Advanced Defense

DJ Turntables

Tutorials

Basic Controls

Advanced Controls

DJ Turntable Controls

My Soundtrack

Remember, being an Icon means you know how to show respect. So show some to the makers of the game by peeping the credits in the Options Menu at least once.

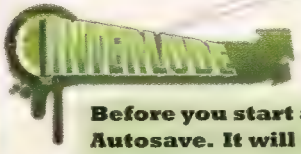
Save/Load Options

Autosave: Enabled or Disabled

Change Storage Device: Hard Drive or Memory Unit

Save: Use this if Autosave is disabled, or just to make sure you've saved.

Load: Use this to load specific Save data.



Before you start a Build a Label file, turn on Autosave. It will save you from headaches should you suddenly have to turn off your console or if you lose power—especially if you plan on having long game sessions.

It might take a fight or two before you find a mix that's right for you, or you may be one of those who are good from the get-go. Regardless, peep the Options Menu at least once to make sure your tastes are met.

BIG BRAWLIN'

If you're gonna talk the talk, you gotta know how to walk the walk. The following pages will teach you everything from basic controls to advanced fighting techniques. No offense, but you need 'em.

BASIC ATTACKS

It doesn't matter if you fight Street Kwon Do or Muay Fly, or use any of the other fighting styles. They all have the same basic attacks. Basic attacks are like a backbeat laid down for a track; they provide a foundation for you to build on to create your fighting style.

UNDERMOVE

It is possible to win some matches with only the basic attacks, but you'll have a hard time doing it. Remember, these are basic attacks. They are meant to be the *base* of your overall fighting style, not stand-alone attacks.

411

There's a grip of different fighting styles, youngblood. A Muay Fly fighter might kick for a strong high attack, a Ghetto Blaster fighter might throw a left hook for his strong high attack, ya dig?

BASIC MOVEMENT

Xbox 360: L

PLAYSTATION®3: left analog stick

Every fight begins at your feet. If you're not close enough or in the right position, you're not going to make contact when you swing. It's as simple as that. That's why you always gotta be moving around. Stay on your toes, just out of your opponent's reach and just far enough away from the edges of the arenas.

As you size up your opponent, staying out of his reach, keep a close watch on his movement. If he gets too bold and rushes in, double-tap the movement control stick in any direction to dodge the attack. When you double-tap the controller, you do a forward, backward, or sideways flip out of the way. Not bad for a young buck.

411

Just as with attacks, each fighting style's evasion moves have their own distinct flava'.

QUICK KICK

Xbox 360: X

PLAYSTATION®3: ■

Muay Fly

The quick high attack is a perfect combo starter, brawla'. It's fast, furious, and a perfect lead-in for a follow-up assault. Its counterpart attack is the strong high attack, but that doesn't mean that quick high is a low-damage attack. It may not have the same impact as strong high, but it can still cause mad damage.

Ghetto Blaster

Street Kwon Do

Beatboxer

Black Panther

Jah Breaka

Knowing when to use quick high is the key. Use it to start off fast combos or to keep opponents guessing. Smart fighters often rely on this attack the same way a boxer relies on his jab. Use it as a multipurpose attack and maximize its potential.

QUICK LOW

Xbox 360: A

PLAYSTATION®3: ×

Muay Fly

Ghetto Blaster

Street Kwon Do

Depending on what kind of fighting style you're using, the quick low attack can either be just like the quick high, or it can be a good blow to mix things up. Quick low is a great attack to use against chumps who tend to overuse high attacks or against fighting styles that rely on kicking more than punching, like Street Kwon Do.

Beatboxer

Black Panther

Jah Breaka

Use quick low to keep your opponent on his toes at all times. That's the beauty of quick attacks; by the time your opponent sees it comin', you've already landed two or three. Quick low attacks are best used to mix up combos, but never as stand-alone attacks.

STRONG HIGH

Xbox 360: Y

PLAYSTATION®3: ▲

Muay Fly

Ghetto Blaster

Street Kwon Do

If you're gonna live strong, you gotta fight strong. Strong high attacks are similar to quick high attacks, but they're more powerful though slightly slower. Just as quick high attacks can also be used to cause damage, strong high attacks can also be used to start combos. They may not be as effective as quick high attacks, but when they connect, the other scrapper feels it for sure, real talk.

Beatboxer

Black Panther

Jah Breaka

Now don't go starting all combos with strong high attacks. You'll just leave yourself open to counter-attack. Instead, use strong high attacks like you would use a sample in a track. Sampled music adds to your beat and makes a hot song even hotter; strong high attacks add to your combos and make you even tougher to predict.

STRONG LOW

Xbox 360: B

PLAYSTATION®3: ●

Muay Fly

The last of your basic attacks, strong low attacks are just like strong high attacks, but they drop the bass a bit, if you know what we mean. They take the assault lower, with slower reaction time but increased power. It's a good trade-off for fighting styles with a bit longer range. Fighters with good range can make the best use of strong low attacks because strong low attacks take the fight closer to the other fighter's center of gravity.

Ghetto Blaster

Street Kwon Do

Beatboxer

Black Panther

Jah Breaka

Quick low attacks also target your opponent's center of gravity, but they lack the power to throw a foe off balance. If you land a solid strong low attack to a busta's midsection, you're sure to send him reeling back, right? What better time to follow up with a fast combo? This is probably one of the best stand-alone attacks in your repertoire. But don't overuse it!

INTERLUDE

You're in it to win it, playa'; there are no rules that say you can't kick a man while he's down. Use any of the basic attacks to stomp your opponent while he's on the ground. Remember: strong attacks are slower than quick attacks, but slightly more powerful.

Just be sure to get out of your opponent's way or prepare to block as he gets up. If you're too close, he'll lay the hurt on you.

HIGH BLOCK

Xbox 360: RT+B before an opponent attacks high

PLAYSTATION®3: R2 + up on the right analog stick before an opponent attacks high

Muay Fly

You may be tough, but chances are you ain't so tough that you can get by without blocking. Any fighter will tell you that fighting defensively is the way to win. The streets are littered with hot-headed fighters that are quick to punch but slow to block. Don't become one of them.

Ghetto Blaster

Street Kwon Do

Muay Fly

Black Panther

A common misconception among human fighters, as opposed to computer-controlled fighters, is that the head is the most vulnerable part of the body. Take out the control center, and the body falls, right? Because of that, high blocks are your primary form of defense. Most combination strikes start with assaults on your dome. Block high and you're one step ahead of the game.

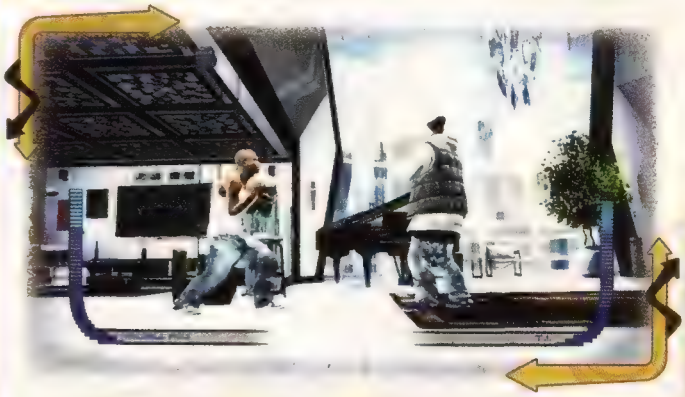
INTERLUDE

Just because you're fighting computer-controlled opponents doesn't mean they won't start combos up high either. High blocks are just as effective against A-I, and I ain't talkin' about The Truth.

LOW BLOCK

Xbox 360: RT + A before an opponent attacks low

PLAYSTATION®3: R2 + down on the right analog stick before an opponent attacks low



Muay Fly

While high blocks will protect you against head hunters, low blocks are especially effective against strong kickers and combo artists. Strong kickers often go for the midsection to throw you off balance; combo artists may start high, but eventually they give you the business down low.

Ghetto Blaster

Street Kwon Do

Beatboxer

Black Panther

INTERMODE

This is a fight, not a baking contest! Not only are you out to put the hurt on the other guy, you gotta make sure he doesn't want any more when you're done. There is no better way to get into another fighter's head than by taunting.

Taunting (LB or RB on Xbox 360 or L1 or R1 on PLAYSTATION®3) aren't attacks in the physical sense, but they do chip away at the other fighter's confidence, pride, patience, and double the damage inflicted by the following attack. Make good use of these as you fight, but don't get too cocky or you'll find yourself on the bad end of a kick while you pop your collar.

ADVANCED ATTACKS

With your basic attacks, you've got a beat laid down. Now it's time to learn how to lay down a beating. As we said before, basic attacks are like a basic beat to a track. Advanced attacks are like the rhymes you spit, sampled bits, and everything that makes a track a No. 1 hit. Bring your best hits to the fight, just as you would bring your best diss to a battle on the mic.

DIRECTIONAL ATTACKS

Directional attacks are an advanced attack form using the right thumbstick. By rolling the right thumbstick in a particular direction, you execute more powerful attacks capable of knockin' some teeth loose.

The following examples are taken from the Street Kwon Do fighting style. Test out the other fighting styles to see what they're capable of.

reaka

ning attacks that may
ckward, most likely into a
key with blocks. Knowing
tack low is most important.
cks, watch your opponent
style that relies heavily on
y not always come at you
be more than ready.

Jah B

Use low blocks to stop incor
otherwise send you flying ba
hazard. Remember, timing is
when an enemy is going to a
For the most effective low blo
carefully. If he uses a fighting
kicking, watch his feet. He ma
low, but when he does, you'll

The attacks are named for the side of the opponent they attack, not for the arm or leg that is delivering the attack. So low force left does not mean an attack from your left side, it means the attack targets your opponent's left side.

And because you're attacking your opponent's left side, your attack has to come from the right half of your body.

Low Force Right and Left

Console	*Low Force Right Command*	*Low Force Left Command*
Xbox 360	R	R
PLAYSTATION®3	R	R

A directional attack is like a basic attack's bigger, tougher brother. Low force right attacks target the lower right part of your opponent's body, right? So to make good use of it, work it into combos where a left-handed or left-footed attack would come in. You follow? They're powerful attacks, for sure, but that doesn't mean they can't be a part of a good combo.

Low force attacks can often be used as good stand-alone attacks. When your enemy comes at you with all he's got, lay a low force attack on him to send him back a bit.

Like low force right, low force left can be a stand-alone attack or part of a combo, but it attacks the left side of your opponent. Executing a low force left attack is a bit riskier, however. Most fighters begin in an orthodox stance, making attacks from the left a bit faster. The extra time it takes to deliver an attack from the right of the body might grant the target enough time to counter.

What we didn't tell you about low force attacks is they can also be great attacks to follow up with after a blocked shot. After blocking an incoming attack, follow up with a quick low force attack and let the scrub know not to try that again.

UNDERLOSE

Need some personal space? Create some distance between you and some busta' gettin' all up in your grill with a low force attack. Certain low force kicks send your weakened enemy for a little trip across the fighting venue.

Better still, use low force attacks to send enemies flying into environmental hazards...and we aren't talkin' about polluted water.

411

Don't confuse high and low force with high power versus low power. High or low force refers to a force attack delivered high or low at a target, nah' mean?

High Force Right and Left

Console	High Force Right Command	High Force Left Command
Xbox 360	R	R
PLAYSTATION®3	R	R

High force right and left attacks are head knockin', teeth shakin', dome rockin' attacks that cause mad damage. They're similar to low force attacks, but attack much higher on the target's body. Even though you may be delivering a simple kick to the head, the force of the kick will be enough to throw the target off balance as if you had attacked his center of gravity.

High force right attacks, for example, can take the shape of dangerous roundhouse kicks that send your enemy stumbling in the opposite direction. Because of their crazy power, high force right and left attacks often leave your target stumbling halfway across the venue.

The best fighters do not rely on high force directional attacks, but instead make them valuable parts of their overall fighting technique. Use them as finishing moves, work them into combos, and even use them as a defensive attack to keep targets off your back while you set up your next pounding.

Just remember that you can follow one high force attack with another only in tight spaces. For example, back an opponent against a wall (one that won't blow up in your grill), send your enemy reeling into the wall with a high force right attack, and then, when he gets stopped by the nearby wall, launch a high force left attack to straighten him back up a bit. Once he's back in front of you, unleash a combo.

Low Force Front and High Force Front

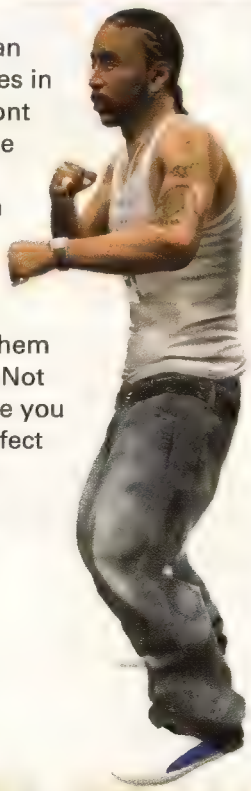
Console	*Low Force Front Command*	*High Force Front Command*
Xbox 360	RT, RT	RT, B
PLAYSTATION®3	Down twice on the right analog stick	Down, then up, on the right analog stick

Force front attacks are no-nonsense, in-your-face (or stomach) attacks that make no pretense of gettin' fancy. You want to damage an opponent, step right up and deliver a force front attack. As with the other directional attacks, high and low refer to the direction of your attack, not its level of power. Make no mistake, these are strong attacks capable of causing mad damage.

Unfortunately, they're not the most effective directional attacks to use in combos. Instead, use them to wrap up strong combos and keep opponents on the defensive. Certain low force front attacks can be used to slip under an enemy's defenses and lay a solid blow on a wide-open abdomen.

Similarly, some high force front attacks can be used to pick away at an approaching fighter. Just as he comes in for the attack, launch a high force front attack and let him know you ain't one to be trifled with. As he stumbles backward, run up and drop him with a series of combos.

Force front attacks are some of your most powerful weapons, young buck. Knowing when to use them will make them extremely effective. Not knowing when to use them will leave you open to a grip of counterattacks. Perfect your skills in Practice Mode before spamming them on the battlefield.



Knowing how much damage each attack inflicts is critical to formulating a strategy. Peep the table below to see how much damage is dealt by each type of attack.

Attack type	*Damage inflicted (1.0 = 1 bar of damage)*
Directional Attack	2.00
Grab Attack—Quick	1.00
Grab Attack—Strong	3.00
Ground Attack—Fast	1.50
Ground Attack—Strong	3.00
Quick Attack	0.75
Strong Attack	1.50
Takedown	5.00
Throw	2.00

GRABS, THROWS, AND GRAPPLE ATTACKS

Console	Grab	Throw	Grapple Attacks
Xbox 360	ⓡ	ⓡ, then ⓡ to neutral, then ⓡ in direction you want to throw	While grabbing, press any attack button combination
PLAYSTATION®3	Up on the right analog stick	Up on the right analog stick, then the right analog stick to neutral, then push the right analog stick in direction you want to throw	While grabbing, press any attack button combination

INTERLUDE

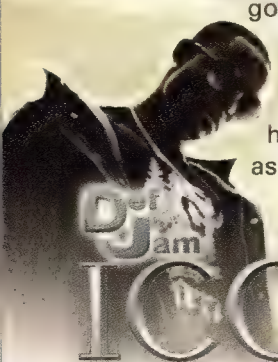
After grabbing, but before throwing, set the right stick to neutral by releasing it for a split second. Don't let it go for too long or your enemy will break out of the grab and put the hurt on you.

You can't be afraid to get up close and personal in a fight. If some fool is mean muggin', fixin' to cause some damage, grab him and toss him across the venue. But you gotta have good timing. To grab an opponent, reach out and pull him in. You're vulnerable for split second before you toss, though, and in that time he can break free and attack.

The trick to throwing effectively is to know where you want to throw your opponent before you grab him. You gotta be quick. Otherwise, you might as well lay down for your enemy and call it a day. Once you got him in your grip, send him flying into the nearest environmental hazard. He'll take damage from the hazard, as well as the throw.

INTERLUDE

Know your beats to properly time throws. If you know the beat to a song, then you know when certain hazards will be triggered. With that knowledge, time your throws perfectly so that your enemy bounces off a hazard right back to you, where you'll be ready to lay another beating on him.



GRAPPLE ATTACKS

Grapple attacks are a lot like quick combos while you've got hold of the punk. Start this attack just as you would a throw, but instead of throwing him, use a basic attack combination of your choice.

As you hold on to your enemy, he can't break free or block your attack. Get creative, you don't want to become predictable, right? Each basic attack executes a different type of grapple attack, so mix things up and bust him up.

SHAKE LOOSE

To break free of a grab, use the right stick to shake loose. Rotate it from the bottom all the way up and snap free.

You can use the same technique to get up off the ground after a takedown or after being knocked down with a series of blows.

TAKEDOWNS

Console	Takedown 1	Takedown 2	Takedown 3	Takedown 4
Xbox 360	A, then ↓	A, then ←	A, then ↑	A, then →
PLAYSTATION®3	Up on the right analog stick, then ↓	Up on the right analog stick, then right ←	Up on the right analog stick, then ↑	Up on the right analog stick, then →

TAKEDOWN 1

Takedowns are just what they sound like. You grab the other guy in the arena and take him down. The purpose of a move like this—aside from being able to cause more damage while your enemy lies helpless on the ground—is to ensure that you're the last man standing at the end of a match.

After long, hard fights, it's not uncommon for two bloodied and beaten men to cling to a final breath after their health bars have been drained. The first one to go down is the loser. Moments like those are perfect for unleashing a takedown.

REVERSALS

It's as Bruce Lee said, "You and your opponent are one. There is a coexisting relationship between you. You coexist with your opponent and become his complement, absorbing his attack and using his force to overcome him."

A reversal is the best way to turn an opponent's strengths into a counterattack. Reversals are a part of every good fighter's repertoire. No matter what style you fight, you gotta know how to turn an opponent's energy against him.

High Reversal

Xbox 360: RT + B just as opponent attacks high

PLAYSTATION®3: R2 + up on the right analog stick just as opponent attacks high

Muay Fly

Ghetto Blaster

Street Kwon Do

As is the case with any good block, a reversal's key element is timing. To pull off a reversal, you have to use the same command as a block. Timing is the only difference between blocking and reversing an attack: time your button press perfectly so it intercepts the incoming attack instead of just blocking it.

Watch your movements just before you block. When you block high, your hands make a different motion (depending on your fighting style) as they prepare to intercept the attack. If no attack is incoming at that exact moment, they'll go into a plain-Jane high block.

Beatboxer

Black Panther

Jah Breaka

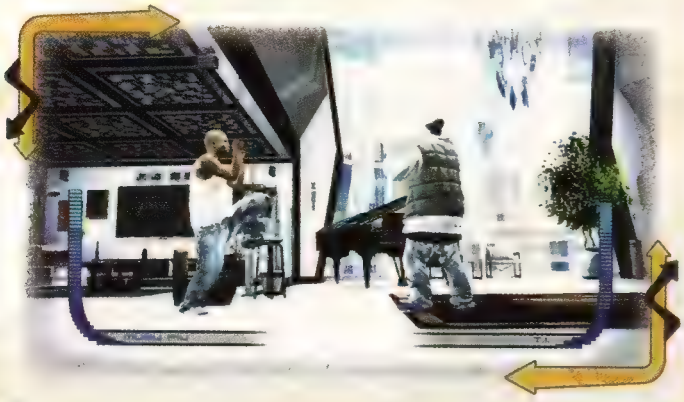
Once you've intercepted the attack, you've successfully stopped your opponent and grabbed hold of him. Now is the time to reverse the attack. Either use a takedown, toss him into a hazard, or beat the crap out of him with a grapple attack.

High reversals are the harder of the two to pull off. An opponent who attacks high will almost always use quick high attacks, so timing will be harder to pin down.

Low Reversal

Xbox 360: RT+B just as opponent attacks low

PLAYSTATION®3: R2 + down on the right analog stick just as opponent attacks low



Muay Fly

Ghetto Blaster

Street Kwon Do

Low reversals are somewhat easier to time and always grant you a strong edge in a fight. The timing is somewhat easier because most human fighters follow a pattern when they attack low. Also consider that a majority of combination attacks begin high and go low in mid-combo, giving you the edge when pulling off low reversals.

Low reversals are a bit tougher to execute against Beatboxers, though. They always punch, so their attacks always start at their shoulders. Even if you watch their shoulders carefully, it's hard to tell if their punches are going high or low.

Muay Fly

Other than that, you gotta know what to look for when your opponent is blocking. Take a good long look at the examples here, and get to know every reversal style. By knowing what to look for, you'll know exactly how to avoid getting your attack reversed.

Street Kwon Do

Street Kwon Do

Reversing attacks is just as much an art form as the martial art you're practicing, youngblood. That means you have to practice reversals just like everything else. It's one thing to block an attack; it's another thing to capitalize on your opponent's strengths. Get to know the difference!

DJ TURNTABLE CONTROLS

This is *DEF JAM: ICON*, playa'! This is where music not only sets a tone for what you're doing, it dictates how you fight. Music here isn't just a background noise to entertain you, it's a weapon.

Learn to properly use the DJ Turntable controls so you can control your environment and use it against your opponent.

WARNING

Watch yourself! Certain opponents get real hot as soon as their song starts to play. They may be lower on health than you, but they can quickly turn the momentum of a fight in their favor when they got their track on.

INTERLUDE

If you see that an enemy is about to switch up a track or scratch the song, interrupt him by pressing the DJ Turntable button (LT for Xbox 360, or L2 for PLAYSTATION®3). When you do, you'll put your foot down, literally, and stop him in his tracks.

SCRATCHING SONGS

Xbox 360: Hold LT and rotate R

PLAYSTATION®3: Hold L2 and rotate the right analog stick

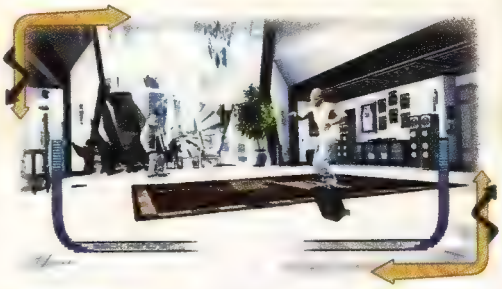
As you fight, the background will thump and pound in concert with the background music? When a deep note full of bass thumps in the song, a piano top pops, or a lowrider bounces. These, young buck, are environmental hazards. But just because they react to the music doesn't mean you can't control them.

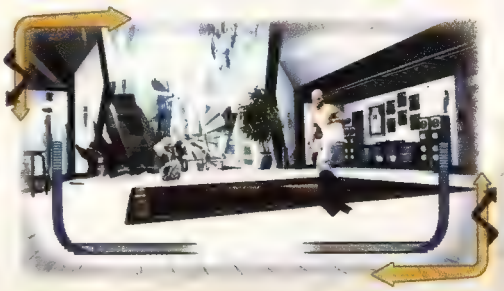
By using the Scratching controls, you can dictate when a song thumps and pops. The advantage of this is that if you send an opponent flying toward a hazard that isn't quite ready to pop, you can force it to pop and damage your downed enemy.

SWITCHING SONGS

Xbox 360: Hold LT, rotate L 2x, then rotate R 2x

PLAYSTATION®3: Hold L2, rotate the left analog stick 2x, then rotate the right analog stick 2x





Switching songs is a lot like scratching. Instead of just scratching a song, you actually change the song that is playing the background. There's a reason you get pumped when your joint is playing. When your song is playing, you become a better, more dangerous fighter.

If your opponent's song is playing, the ball, so to speak, is in his court. The trick to safely changing a song mid-battle is to drop your opponent and switch songs while he's on the ground. Certain fighting styles are better than others at switching songs, but every fighter can switch songs.

INTERLUDE

Watch your hands carefully when switching songs. As soon as you're done rotating one thumbstick, your other arm pops up, prompting you to rotate the other. If you switch from one stick to the other too soon, your song switch turns into a poorly scratched single.

411

You can't switch songs or scratch in Beating with Bass Mode. In that mode, there is one track for both fighters.

SHOT CALLIN'

Check it! This chapter is called Shot Callin' because in a fight, that's what you need to be doin'. You're gonna be trading shots with your enemy, for sure, but if you're not the one callin' the shots, you'll be the one taking them.

We're dealing here with general fight strategy. No matter what fighting style you use, we got you covered. Before you head into a brawl, you gotta know a few things. Feel free to take notes.

HUD VS. WEAR 'N' TEAR

While brawling, you can keep track of the fight in two different ways. The first is by activating the Heads-Up Display (HUD) in the Options Menu. Do that, and a series of blue bars on the screen will keep track of your health as you fight. As you take damage, they start to diminish. Pretty standard stuff, right?

Fighting with the HUD

Fighting with only wear 'n' tear

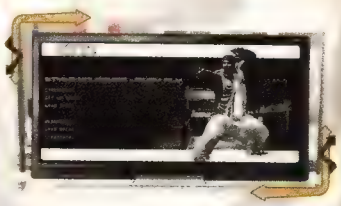
Well, peep this, the bars are different shades of blue to keep track of different "stages" of your health. When the first and lightest section of blue bars disappears, you're down to three-quarters health. When the second section of blue bars disappears, you're down to one-half of your health. By comparing how many bars of a particular shade of blue you have to your enemy's bars of the same color, you can accurately keep track of who is in the lead.

Or you can leave the HUD turned off and simply watch the wear and tear on each fighter's clothing and face. As a fight goes on, your gear takes a thrashing. Same goes for your face and posture. If you start seeing blood on your grill or your body starts to slump over as you walk around, you're in deep trouble. Keep a close watch on who has the most damage and you'll know who is winning. It's not quite as precise as using the HUD, but it definitely keeps it real on the battlefield, nah' mean?

INTERLUDE

Regardless of whether the HUD is on or off, when one fighter is down to one-quarter of his health, the colors on the screen get richer and saturate heavily. If you're on the losing end of a fight, consider that your warning.

KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS; KNOW THEIR WEAKNESSES

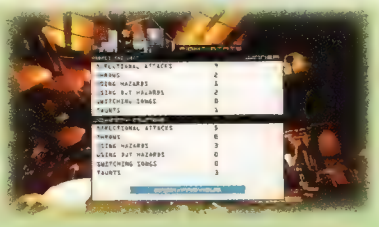


Knowing yourself is your best advantage in a fight. If you don't know what you're capable of, you will always hold back. You'll always second-guess yourself. On the flip side, if you don't know your weaknesses, you'll always make mistakes. It sounds simple, but that's just the thing, see? It *is* that simple. To truly know yourself, you gotta know what style is best for you. Take every fighting style to Practice Mode and find a perfect fit for you. Once you do, come back to this chapter and get to know all about that style's strengths and weaknesses.

Similarly, know your opponents. This book details every fighter and lists his fighting style. If you didn't know that Big Boi was a Beatboxer, you wouldn't know how to handle him in a scrap, would you? You gotta' scout 'em to beat 'em. For now, take a look at the following table and keep it handy as a quick reference.

Martial Art Style	*Strengths*	*Weaknesses*
Black Panther	Directional attacks, scratch speed	Grab speed, song switching
Beatboxer	Grab speed, Scratch speed	Song switch, get up speed
Ghetto Blaster	DJ scratching, get up speed	Song switching, grab break
Jah Breaka	Directional counters, song switch	Scratch speed, Grab speed
Muay Fly	Get up speed, grab speed	Grab break, scratching
Street Kwon Do	Grab speed, Grab break speed	Song switch, get up speed

INTERLUDE



Better check yo'self before you wreck yo'self! You gotta keep an eye on your strategy to know where you need to improve or where you're overcompensating. A great way to do this is to peep the stats at the end of a fight.

If you see that you're using way more directional attacks than throws or you're not using the environmental hazards, for example, then you know where you need to improve. If you're overusing one technique, then consider it a big warning sign that you're overcompensating and fighting one-dimensional fights. You might have gotten past a few busta's, but relying too much on one thing will get you punked out in no time.

BEATS AND BEATINGS

You could get to know your preferred fighting style up and down, but there will be something new in every fight—the background tracks. You can fight T.I. 12 times and need a different strategy every time. Why? Because a different track could be playing every time, that's why.

You could practice fighting with a background joint *in* every joint, but the best plan of attack is to get to know the tracks well enough so that it doesn't matter where you're fighting. Don't worry, we cover every venue too. For now, concentrate on the music.

As you fight, keep a rhythm in your head. It shouldn't be that hard, the song should do all the work. The key is to know which beats in the song trigger the environmental hazards. Watch the background carefully and keep track of every single beat. When the big bass beat thumps, watch for the venue's main hazard to go off.

Aside from bass beats, listen for smaller percussive beats to trigger other hazards in the environment. Keep a ticking clock in your head as the song plays, because that clock will tell you when to throw an enemy toward particular hazards. The best way to memorize a beat is to play Beatings with Bass Mode with particular songs. It doesn't matter exactly where you practice, as long as you know the songs. Once you know the trigger beats, all you have to do is watch for what pops in a particular venue.

In the meantime, peep the following strategy for every song in the game!

INTERLUDE

Not completely familiar with all the musical terms? We're always lookin' out. Keep reading for the 411 on everything music-related.

Big beat: The beats that trigger the venue's main hazards.

Bridge: A piece of music that transitions from one piece to another.

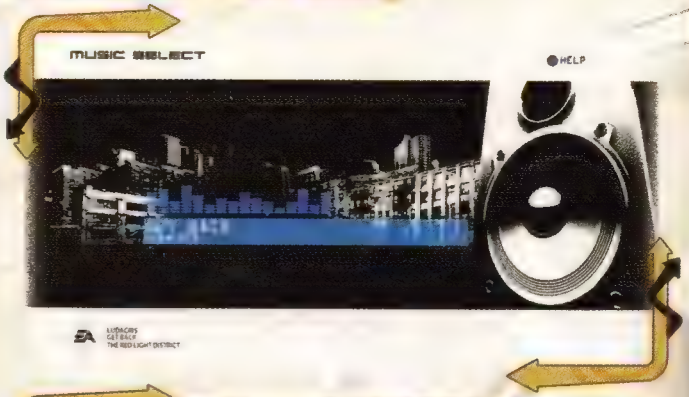
Chorus: A line or set of lines repeated at different intervals of a track.

Drum fill: The part of a track where percussive beats fill an empty part of the song.

Natural big beat: A big beat that isn't triggered by DJ Turntable controls, but instead is triggered by the natural beat of the music.

Verse: Varied lyrics that make up the bulk of a track. These, unlike chorus, do not typically repeat.

LUDACRIS "GET BACK"



Big Beats: 29

Fighting Styles

Muay Fly **Ghetto Blaster**

Track Breakdown

There are three choruses in the song, and each has five big beats that are triggered after the horn section (six seconds of separation). There are three verses with zero big beats during the first two verses (each 45 seconds long); the third verse has two big beats during the first part of the verse (10 and 20 seconds). The intro and outro follow the same structure as the chorus, triggering a big beat that ends the horn section.

Scratch

Scratch to first chorus **Scratch to third chorus**

Lay the Beatdown

This song works well with all styles, but a Muay Fly fighter can really take advantage. During the chorus, stay defensive to send your opponent into a natural big-beat hazard using a directional attack. The first two verses have long lulls without beats so don't be afraid to scratch the music just to return to a heavy big-beat section. Lots of hazards usually force fresh fighters into attacking without thinking of the consequences. As soon as you block a power strike or directional attack, counter-attack and send your opponent flying into a hazard.

METHOD MAN AND REDMAN "DA ROCKWILDER"

Big Beats: 11

Fighting Styles

Ghetto Blaster **Black Panther**

Track Breakdown

The big beats are spread out through the entire song. The two verses have 20-second sections without big beats. The rest of the song has big beats separated by 10 seconds.

Scratch

To Method Man's Verse **To Redman's Verse**

Lay the Beatdown

This is one of the few songs with big beats spread evenly throughout. Balanced fighters are best suited to this style of song because no fighter stat really shines. Your fighting strategy needs to be adaptable. Mix up your grabs and directional attacks when a big beat is about to occur.

Most opponents will be on the defensive when the big beat is about to occur, so go on the offensive after a big beat. Grab your opponent and perform a few grab strikes. Immediately follow up your grab strike combo with a directional attack. It will be powered up, so it should send your opponent into a hazard. The time that elapses during your grab strike combo should be enough to trigger the next big beat.

MIKE JONES "GOT IT SEWED UP (REMIX)"

Big Beats: 12

Fighting Styles

Beatboxer **Street Kwon Do**

Track Breakdown

There is one big beat every 13 seconds. This is marked by the drum fill that completes the pattern in the fourth measure.

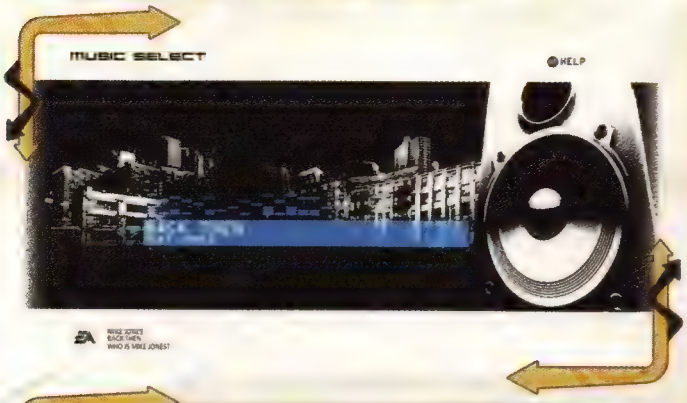
Scratch

To phone number section **To chorus section**

Lay the Beatdown

This song has one big beat every 13 seconds without fail. Being a balanced fighter is helpful, but scratching is really important. Know when the big beats are about to occur, and do not try to be offensive during this part. Your goal is to send your opponent into a hazard and scratch the music. Always attack after big beats occur. You do not want to be countered and sent into a naturally occurring hazard. Go for grabs often and use the lack of big beats to your advantage by throwing your opponent on a hazard, then scratching.

MIKE JONES "BACK THEN"



Big Beats: 25

Fighting Styles

Beatboxer

Track Breakdown

There is a big beat on the "back" of the "back then" line in the chorus. There is also one in the middle of the first and second verses.

Scratch

To beginning of first chorus — **To middle of second chorus**

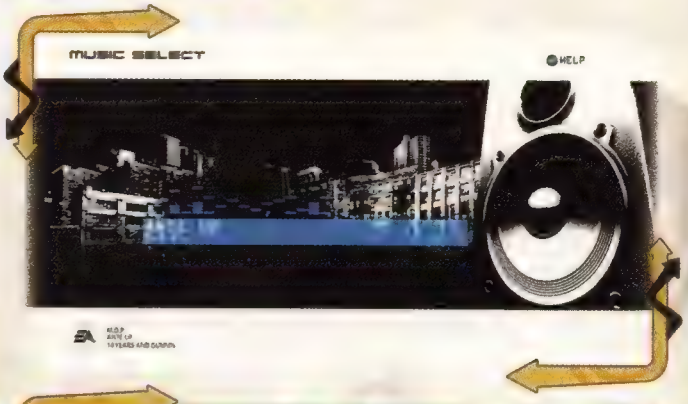
Lay the Beatdown

This Mike Jones song seems built for a block-and-counter style fighter, but it is actually tailored more to Mike Jones's style, if executed properly. During the chorus of this song, you have several opportunities to send your opponent into a naturally occurring hazard. This also means that you are several times at risk of being sent into the hazard after being blocked. That's why a Beatboxer can win, if he uses his grab speed to his advantage. During the verse, take a break from grabbing and soften your opponent up with strikes to mix up your attack.

Strategy

Don't go for any directional attacks unless your opponent has completely thwarted all of your attempts at grabbing.

M.O.P. "ANTE UP"



Big Beats: 24

Fighting Styles

Ghetto Blaster — **Black Panther**

Track Breakdown

At the start of the song, big beats occur on the first beat of each measure. There are big beats on the "ante" of the line "ante up" in the chorus. Big beats also occur on the first beat after the chorus. Additionally, big beats are located within the verses when the vocalist changes up.

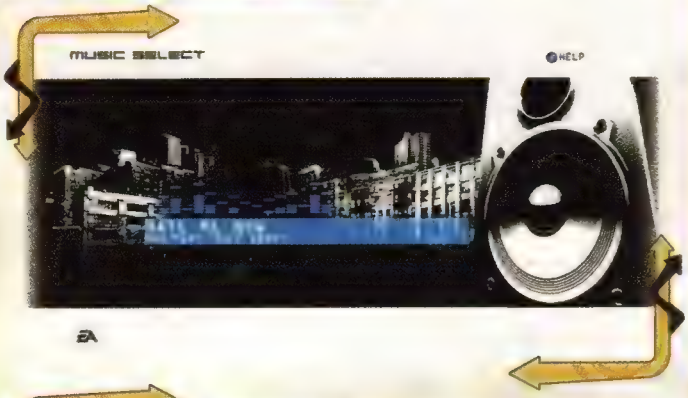
Scratch

To first "ante" in the intro of the song — **To last "ante" in the second chorus**

Lay the Beatdown

The hazards are spread throughout the song, but the lengths between them vary. The "average" fighting styles work best with this song. During the chorus, send your opponent into a hazard by using a takedown. The get-up timing for your opponent should keep him down long enough that the big beat will occur naturally. During the verse, scratch the music when your opponent is in a hazard. When he gets up, the chorus will be playing; if you can the upper hand on him quickly, you can get back-to-back big damage.

NAS "PATIENCE NOW"



Big Beats: 23

Fighting Styles

Muay Fly **Ghetto Blaster**

Track Breakdown

There are four big beats in each chorus and one on the first beat of the verse after each chorus. Additionally, big beats are in the middle of each of the three verses.

Scratch

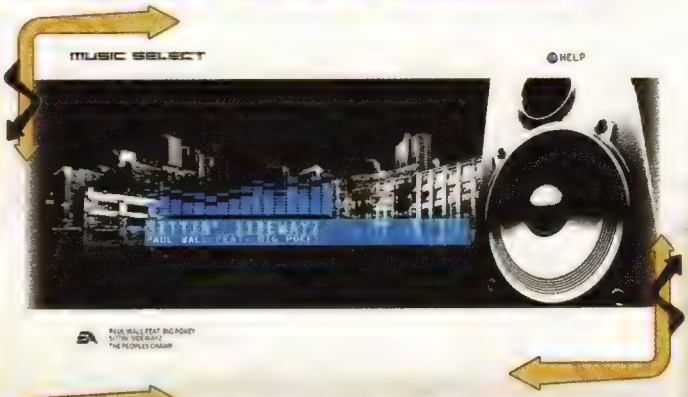
To the last beat of the first chorus

To first beat of the third chorus

Lay the Beatdown

Controlling the momentum of the fight during the chorus is key to victory. The chorus contains four big beats in 20 seconds. Set up an aggressive upbeat pacing for the fight. Exchange attacks with your opponent until the chorus, then bait him into making a risky attack and counter him into a hazard. Protect yourself against the grab by keeping your distance. During the end of the verses, square yourself up with a hazard so that it is easy to send your opponent into it with a counter-directional, just in time for the dangerous chorus.

PAUL WALL "SITTIN' SIDEWAYZ"



Big Beats: 26

Fighting Styles

Muay Fly **Jah Breaka**

Track Breakdown

Big beats occur on the "wayz" of the line "sittin' sidewayz" in the chorus. There are also big beats on the first beat of the verse after each chorus.

Scratch

To the second half of the first chorus

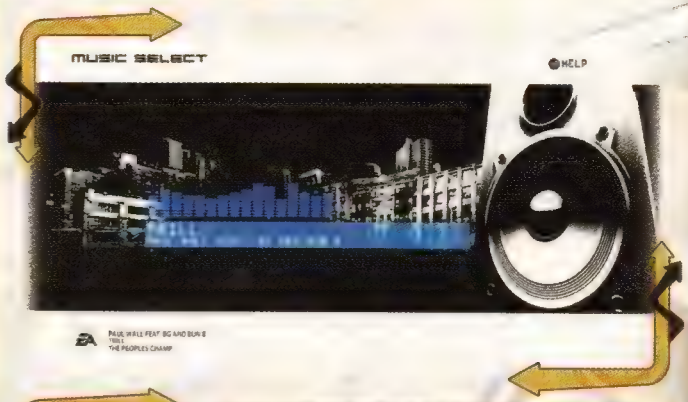
To the first beat of the third chorus

Lay the Beatdown

This song has the most dangerous chorus in the game. There are seven big beats in a span of about 20 seconds. There is no need for good scratching ability because there are so many big beats strung together. But it is important to use your scratch at every opportunity to get to the chorus of this song.

Even if your opponent is on his feet and can defend it, scratch to the chorus to make the fight more hectic and out of control. Just stick with a strong defense and quick strike any grab attempt coming your way. Your goal is to keep the environment dangerous so your opponent doesn't have any room to breathe.

PAUL WALL "TRILL"



Big Beats: 19

Fighting Styles

Muay Fly | **Ghetto Blaster**

Track Breakdown

Big beats trigger on every other mention of "trill" in each of the three choruses.

Scratch

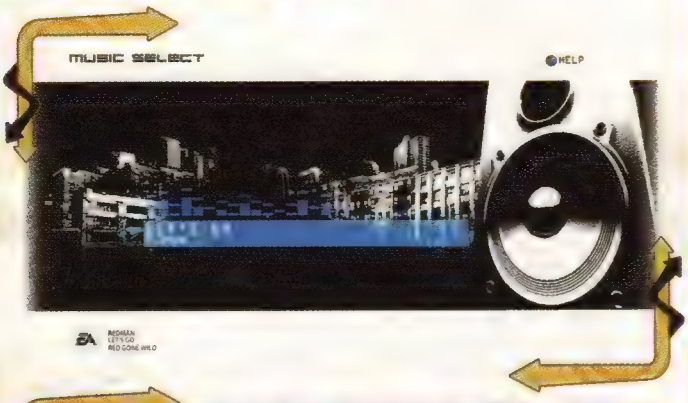
To first beat in the second chorus | **To the middle of the third chorus**

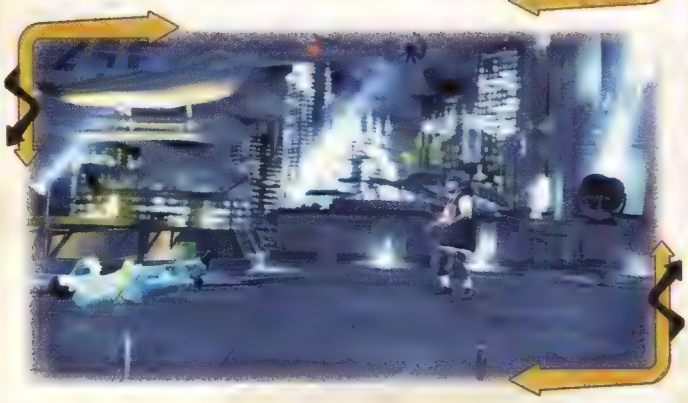
Lay the Beatdown

The only dangerous part of "Trill" is the chorus. The three 45-second verses do not contain hazards, so some scratching ability is needed to cause damage during the verse lull. Try not to give too much away about your strategy during the verse. You want to save all your surprises for the chorus.

Try lots of stand-alone directional attacks during the verse, then go for a grab during the chorus. Any strategy similar to that will work as well. Basically, use the lack of big beats during the verse to set up your offense for the big-beat-heavy chorus.

REDMAN "LET'S GO"





Big Beats: 19

Fighting Styles

Black Panther — **Street Kwon Do**

Track Breakdown

Big beats occur on each "go" of the line "let's go" in the choruses. Additionally, big beats occur throughout the verses on the first beat after a short instrumental breakdown.

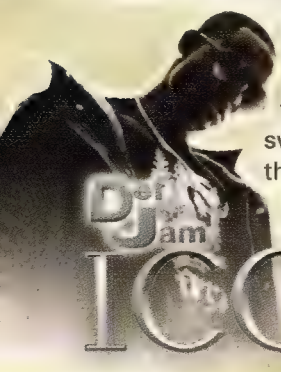
Scratch

To the first beat of the second chorus

To the beat following the instrumental breakdown with the air horn

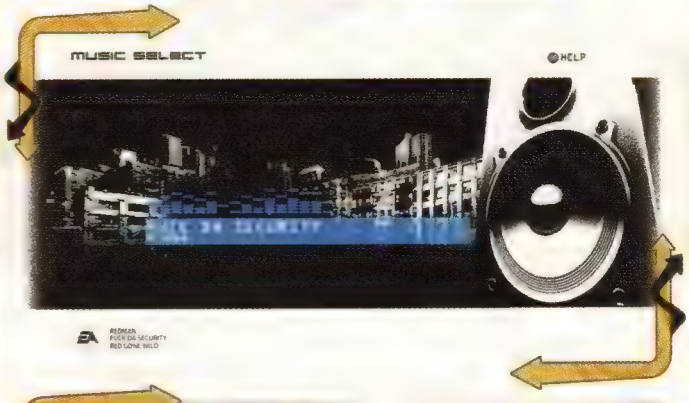
Lay the Beatdown

There are not enough natural big beats in this song to effectively formulate a winning strategy. Combining the natural big-beat damage with scratching-hazard damage is the most effective way to beat down an opponent to this song. Stay near hazards throughout the entire fight.



Use your quick scratching ability any time your opponent is in danger. Try not to perform stand-alone directional attacks; these will leave you vulnerable to a song switch or getting hit onto a hazard during the dangerous chorus.

REDMAN "F**K DA SECURITY"



Big Beats: 13

Fighting Styles

Black Panther — **Street Kwon Do**

Track Breakdown

Big beats trigger on every other first beat after the line "f**k da security" in each chorus.

Scratch

To the first beat of the second chorus

To the middle of the third chorus

Lay the Beatdown

All of the big beats occur in succession toward the beginning of the song. The song starts with seven big beats in the first 30 seconds—more than half of the big beats in the entire song. The best strategy is to scratch to the middle of the third chorus often to get the beginning of the song to loop over.

This is where you want to be on the defensive to counter your opponent's attacks and send him into a hazard. As in the other Redman song, you should stay near hazards throughout the course of the fight. Most damage should be caused by scratching the hazards or using the natural big beats at the beginning of the song.

SEAN PAUL "ALL OUT"

Big Beats: 22

Fighting Styles

Jah Breaka

Track Breakdown

Big beats occur on each "all" in the line "all out" within each chorus. Big beats also occur on the first beat of the verse after the chorus.

Scratch

To the first beat of the second chorus

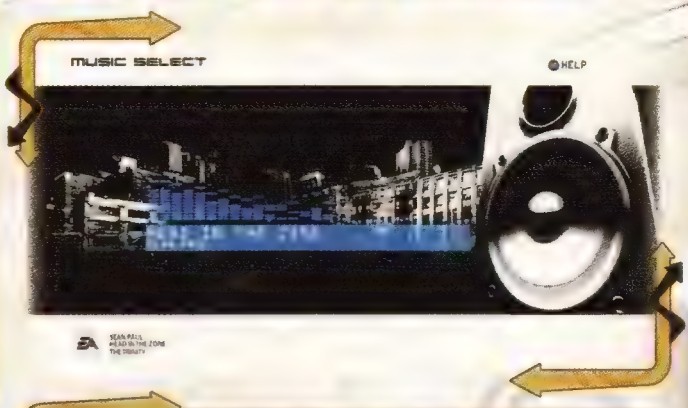
To the middle of the third chorus

Lay the Beatdown

Each chorus contains five big beats separated by four seconds each. A verse plays, followed by another heavy-hitting chorus. At the end of the verse, go for a big attack that will send your opponent flying toward a hazard. If you get reversed, leave yourself enough time to get out of the hazard before the chorus hits.

During the chorus, take some risks but stay defensive. You want your enemy to make a mistake. After you counter him into a hazard, he'll most likely get up and try to attack you again to take advantage of the beat-heavy chorus. Just be prepared to block and counter him again.

SEAN PAUL "HEAD IN THE ZONE"



Big Beats: 20

Fighting Styles

Jah Breaka

Muay Fly

Track Breakdown

Big beats happen in the choruses on "head" of the line "get your head in the zone." Also, big beats trigger on the first beat of the verse after each chorus.

Scratch

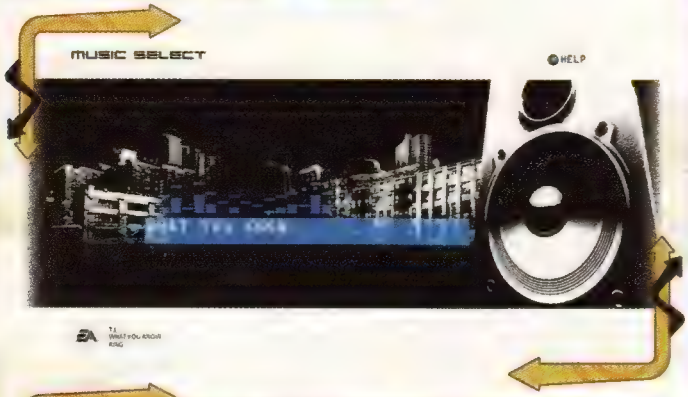
To the first beat of the second chorus

To the middle of the fourth chorus

Lay the Beatdown

There are big beats spread out evenly throughout the entire song. Use your get-up speed as an advantage. Take a few risks here and there; you will most likely be able to get up before the next big beat goes off. During a reversal, take some extra time to wait for the next big beat. Any stall time is needed for the next big beat to go off. Let the fight come to you and be patient. Engage the opponent with a risky attack when you see fit.

T.I. "WHAT YOU KNOW"



Big Beats: 18

Fighting Styles

Street Kwon Do | **Beatboxer**

Track Breakdown

Big beats are located throughout the entire song. They occur at the conclusion of each chorus or verse, when the strings rise and fall.

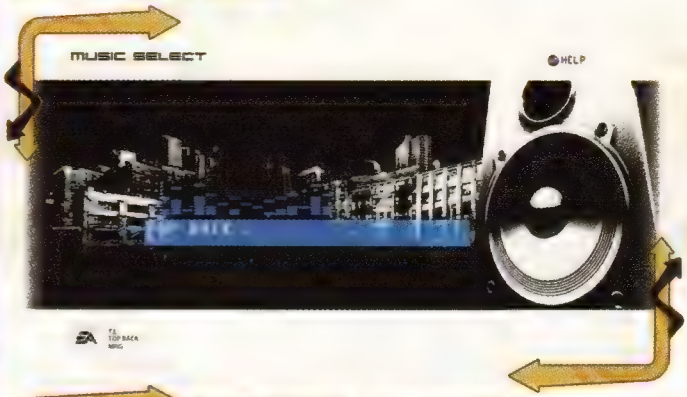
Scratch

To the middle of the first chorus | **To the first beat of the third chorus**

Lay the Beatdown

Every 13 seconds, a big beat will go off. The big beat in this song is easy to predict, so even players who haven't heard this song will be able to quickly understand how it functions. Using a quick grab fighting and quick scratching style should give you the upper hand. Mix up your directional attacks and grab when the big beat is approaching. You don't want to become predictable during this track.

T.I. "TOP BACK"



Big Beats: 20

Fighting Styles

Street Kwon Do | **Black Panther**

Track Breakdown

Big beats occur five times during each of the four choruses.

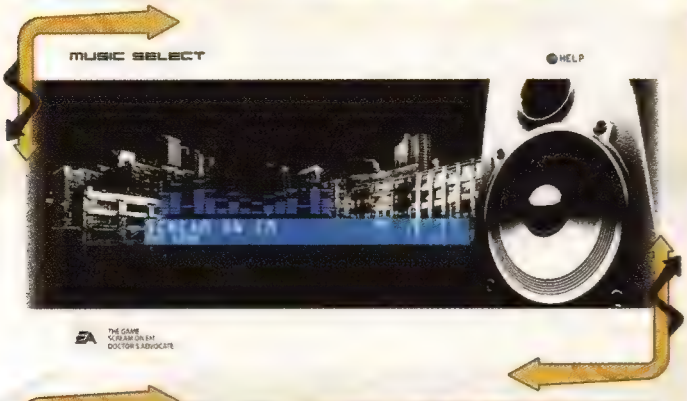
Scratch

To the first beat of the first chorus | **To the middle of the second chorus**

Lay the Beatdown

This song is all about the chorus. There are no big beats during the verse. This makes your song-scratching ability more important. However the chorus is still dangerous, so being able to counter a directional attack is still what will bring you the most success. Scratch to the chorus when you are low on health. A few natural beat hazards can do lots of damage real quick.

THE GAME "SCREAM ON 'EM"



Big Beats: 21

Fighting Styles

Muay Fly	Ghetto Blaster

Track Breakdown

Big beats begin during the intro and trigger five times in each of the three choruses. There are also big beats in the middle of each verse, after each drum fill.

Scratch

To the first beat of the first chorus	To the middle of the second chorus

Lay the Beatdown

There is not much room to breathe in this song. The chorus has five big beats within a period of 20 seconds. The verse even has a big beat in the middle. Taunt and play around with the busta' only if you are sure of victory. Damage can add up very quickly, so be aggressive throughout the entire fight. There is no time to be patient.

THE GAME "IT'S OKAY (ONE BLOOD)"

Big Beats: 27

Fighting Styles

Muay Fly	Jah Breaka

Track Breakdown

Big beats begin in the intro and trigger seven times through each of the three choruses. Additionally there are big beats within the verses immediately after each musical buildup.

Scratch

To the first beat of the first chorus	To the middle of the second chorus

Lay the Beatdown

This song has the quickest succession of big beats. There are five in the span of 12 seconds. Don't use takedowns during the chorus; you won't have enough time to place your opponent on a hazard and successfully get away. Use long-range attacks, like throws and direction attacks, to send your opponent flying. Evade immediately after sending your opponent toward a hazard; he'll most likely fly right back at you.

YOUNG JEEZY "SOUL SURVIVOR"

Big Beats: 18

Fighting Styles

Black Panther	Ghetto Blaster

Track Breakdown

Big beats occur during each of the four choruses. Choruses 1–4 have two big beats. Each verse after a chorus has a big first beat. The fourth chorus is preceded by a pre-chorus that has big beats at the beginning of each line sung by Akon.

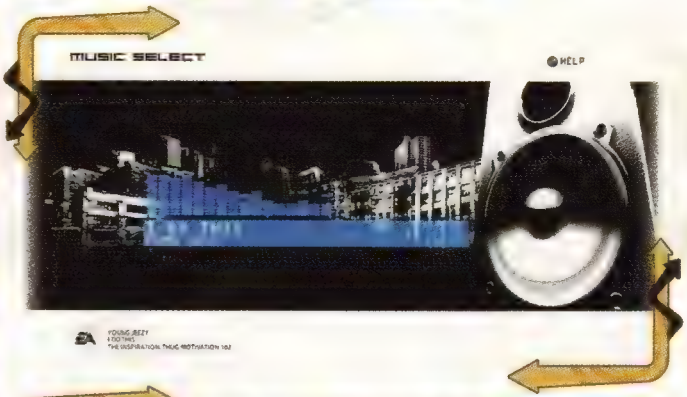
Scratch

To the first beat of the second chorus	To the first beat of the pre-chorus

Lay the Beatdown

This joint is hot, but it gets even more intense toward the end. There are not many opportunities to do damage at the beginning. Use takedowns, because they keep your opponent on the ground the longest. Stay near hazards to take advantage of the big beats in the beginning. This strategy will not work for the entire length of the song, though. As the song progresses, get farther away from the hazards and use grab and throw to send your opponent into the hazards.

YOUNG JEEZY "I DO THIS"



Big Beats: 23

Fighting Styles

Black Panther	Jah Breaka

Track Breakdown

During each of the four choruses the big beat occurs on the word "shit" of the line "I do this shit." There are also big beats in the verses triggered on the first beat after a snare drum roll.

Scratch

To the middle of the first chorus	To the beginning of the third chorus

Lay the Beatdown

This song has consistent beats throughout, with the longest gap being 13 seconds. Takedowns are the best way to hurt your opponent. Try to get all of your grabs on reversals. Your opponent will most likely be aggressive throughout the entire song, so use that against him. Get a reversal and perform some grab attacks or simply throw your opponent onto a hazard. Try not to use scratches, because there are lots of big beats coming anyway.

YUNG JOC "IT'S GOIN' DOWN"

Big Beats: 18

Fighting Styles

Street Kwon Do — **Black Panther**

Track Breakdown

Big beats trigger three times in each of the three choruses. The first one starts when the chorus begins, the other two start once the beat comes back in. There are also big beats within the verses. They occur immediately after each chorus and after each drum fill.

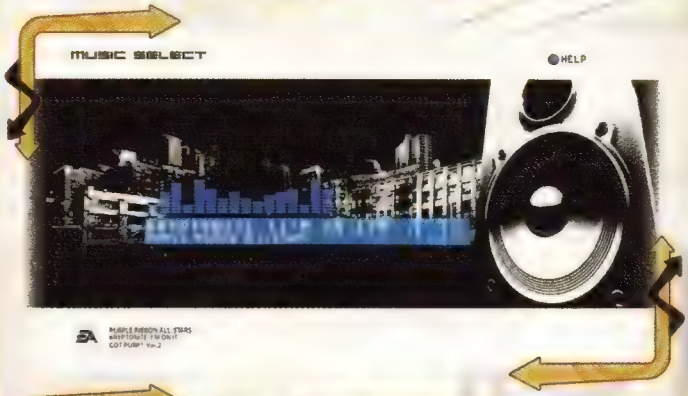
Scratch

To the beginning of the first chorus — **To the middle of the second chorus**

Lay the Beatdown

The big beats come in bursts on this song, but that only happens three times. It is better to use the scratch mechanic to create the hazards. Use powered-up directional attacks to send your opponent flying, and then scratch the music to create the big beat. During the burst of big beats, use lots of throws; your opponent will not be expecting to be grabbed.

PURPLE RIBBON ALL-STARS "KRYPTONITE (I'M ON IT)"



Big Beats: 23

Fighting Styles

Beatboxer

Track Breakdown

Big beats occur four times in each chorus. The first one hits on the "I" in the line "I be on that kryptonite." The second hits twice on the word "air," and the last one hits once on the word "kryptonite." There are also big beats located throughout the verses, after each instrumental dropout.

Scratch

To the beginning of the first chorus

Lay the Beatdown

This song has a unique structure in that the chorus has three big beats close together. The verse is broken up by three different big beats. The gaps get longer as the verse goes on. Your strategy needs to accommodate this change. As the verse goes on, you need to scratch the hazards more and more. As the chorus gets close, throw your opponent onto the natural big beat. The big-beat chorus will send you and your opponent into a frenzy, so just keep your cool and stick to your strategy.

KONKRETE FEATURING BIG BOI "WHAT'S THAT SMELL"

Big Beats: 13

Fighting Styles

Beatboxer

Track Breakdown

Big beats trigger twice during each chorus on every other mention of "what's" in the line "what's that smell." Additionally, big beats occur within the verses, immediately after the chorus and after each drum roll.

Scratch

To middle of the first chorus

To big beat in verse before third chorus

Lay the Beatdown

This song has one of the fewest numbers of big beats in the game. There are large gaps between the big beats: 12 seconds is the shortest. You must be good at scratching to perform well to this song. You do not need to take risks when fighting. There is no need to perform stand-alone directional attacks. Use the lack of big beats to your benefit, because this can be frustrating to an enemy who wants to block and counter. Don't allow your opponent enough time to switch the song.

E-40 "TELL ME WHEN TO GO"

Big Beats: 22

Fighting Styles

Black Panther

Ghetto Blaster

Track Breakdown

Big beats are focused mainly in the choruses—there are a total of four big beats in each. They occur on every other "tell" and "go" of the line "tell me when to go." There are also big beats in the verses at each conclusion of the chorus.

Scratch

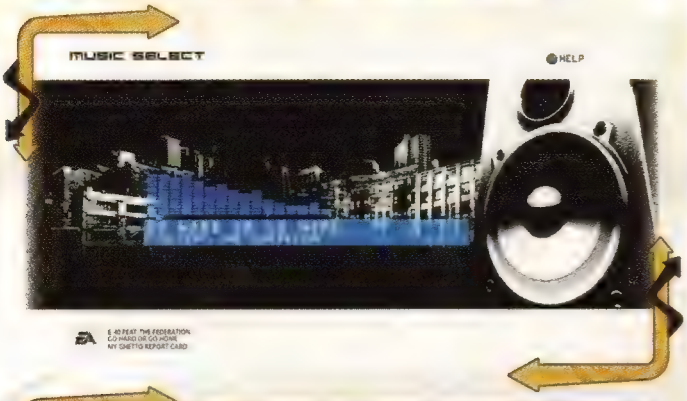
To middle of first chorus

To beginning of third chorus

Lay the Beatdown

This song should help you develop your toe-to-toe fighting. The verses are long enough that you shouldn't have to worry about getting blocked and countered into a natural big-beat hazard. Pick your opportunities when attacking and keep your opponent guessing. During every verse, start moving your opponent close to a hazard. Then, when the five big-beat chorus hits, change up your strategy and send him flying into a natural big-beat hazard.

E-40 "GO HARD OR GO HOME"



Big Beats: 22

Fighting Styles

Black Panther — **Ghetto Blaster**

Track Breakdown

Three big beats begin in the intro of the song. The first verse has one big beat as soon as the lyrics begin. Each chorus has four big beats on every other "hard" of the line "go hard or go home." Verses have big beats immediately after the choruses.

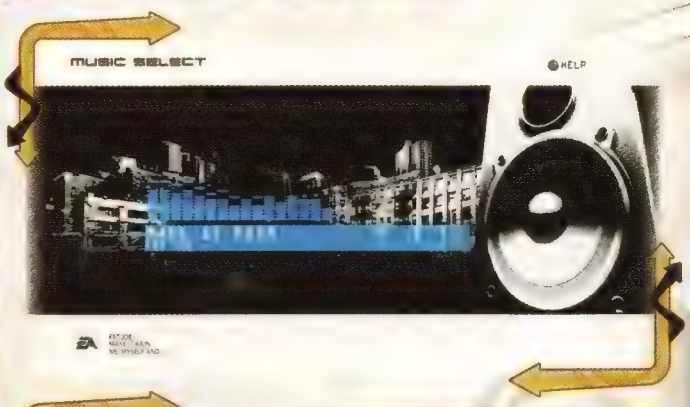
Scratch

To the start of the first chorus — **To the middle of the second chorus**

Lay the Beatdown

You can follow the same strategy in this song as the other E-40 song. Use the verses to get your opponent near a hazard. Use a lot of stand-alone directional attacks. Start positioning yourself so that your opponent will be square with a hazard. When the chorus hits, do a one- or two-hit combo to power up your directional attacks. Mix up your high and low and send your enemy stumbling or flying into a hazard. The chorus is deadly, so you might be able to get him twice.

FAT JOE "MAKE IT RAIN"



Big Beats: 20

Fighting Styles

Beatboxer — **Street Kwon Do**

Track Breakdown

Big beats are generally focused within the four choruses. There are four in each, two on the word "crack" in the line "'cause, yo, we crack man," and two on the word "rain" in the line "We make it rain on 'em." There are also big beats on the first beat of the verse after each chorus.

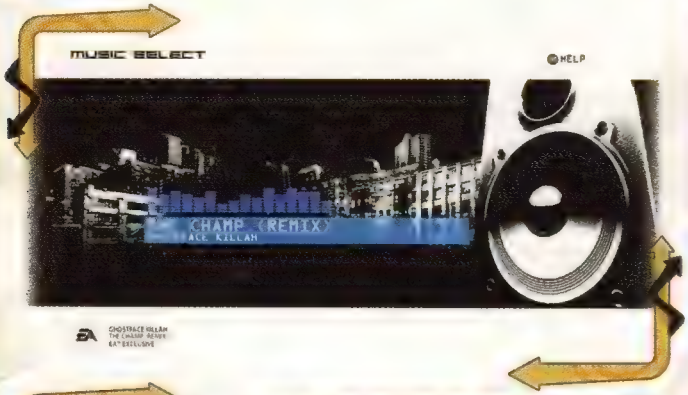
Scratch

To the end of the first chorus — **To the beginning of the third chorus**

Lay the Beatdown

This is the only song in which the chorus is long and the big beats are spread out, separated by seven seconds. You need to be able to get on your opponent quickly when he gets up. Send him flying into a hazard and quickly run toward him. Do not hit him while he is down. Try to immediately initiate a combo so that you can send him flying into the next big beat. An experienced player should be able to get three hazards during the chorus. Mix up your grabs and your directional attacks so your opponent can't figure out your pattern.

GHOSTFACE KILLAH "THE CHAMP (REMIX)"



Big Beats: 18

Fighting Styles

Street Kwon Do — **Black Panther**

Track Breakdown

Big beats are located throughout the track. In the verses, big beats occur on the first beat after each short guitar solo. Additionally, three big beats occur within the chorus and bridge (the part where the boxing bell and crowd are heard).

Scratch

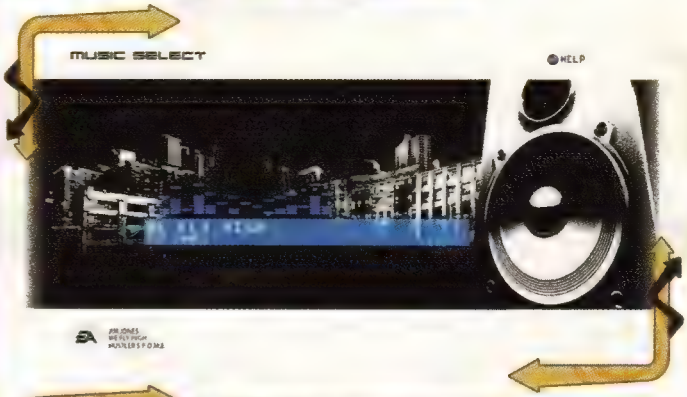
To the start of the first chorus and bridge (Where Mr. T makes his appearance)

To the end of the second chorus

Lay the Beatdown

This song is all over the place. There are gaps without big beats and then sections with lots of big beats in a row. This is probably the most advanced song in the game. You need to have a diverse offense and a solid defense to perform well. Try not to scratch too often, as this will allow your opponent to get a better understanding of the song structure. Use scratching when there are gaps, and use the combo system to power up your directional attacks when there are lots of big beats. Be selective in the times that you want to attack.

JIM JONES "WE FLY HIGH"



Big Beats: 19

Fighting Styles

Ghetto Blaster — **Black Panther**

Track Breakdown

Big beats occur four times in each of the four choruses. There are also two big beats within the verses after both sections where the drums fall out.

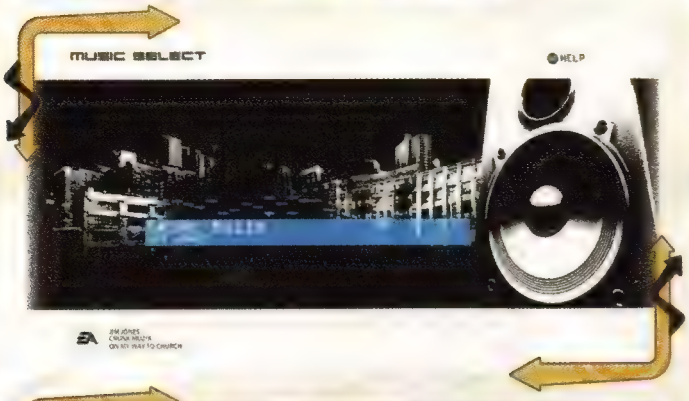
Scratch

To the middle of the first chorus — **To the beginning of the third chorus**

Lay the Beatdown

The key here is the second verse. There is a big beat right in the middle. Beginning players will not expect one here; use this to your advantage. Set up your opponent so that he is near the hazard in the second verse and send him flying at the right moment. Turn toward the camera and taunt him to really get in his head. The chorus requires you to be smart about your attacks, so don't get blocked and countered into a hazard.

JIM JONES "CRUNK MUZIK"



Big Beats: 24

Fighting Styles

Ghetto Blaster

Track Breakdown

Big beats are located throughout this song. In the choruses the big beats are on the words: "how," "fight," and "stupid" of the line "you know how we movin' right? Move cause we in tha mood to fight, this is that get crunk move bitch, get drunk stupid." In the verses there are big beats at the start of every verse.

Scratch

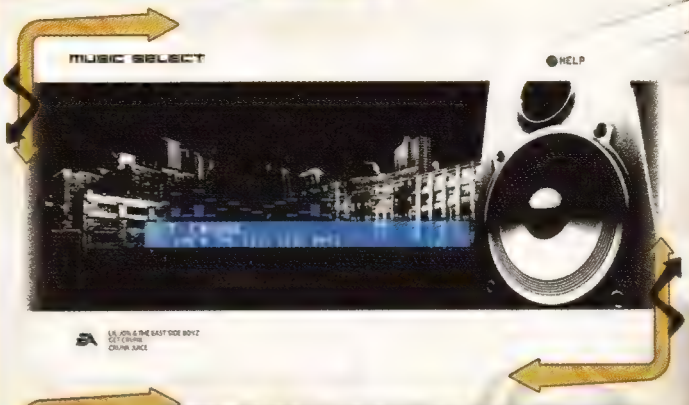
To the word "fight" in the second chorus

To the word "how" in the third chorus

Lay the Beatdown

This song is a little crazy. There are six big beats, each approximately three seconds apart during each chorus—a dangerous time to be hanging around a hazard. The first verse is accentuated by a big beat every four bars (approximately 12 seconds), giving you plenty of time to put your opponent there any way you please, or to use DJ Turntables. The second verse is accentuated by some big beats early on, and then opens up before the final chorus. In general, wait for the choruses to end before trying to switch songs or use takedowns into hazards. If you learn this song well, it can definitely work to your advantage.

LIL JON "GET CRUNK"



Big Beats: 34

Fighting Styles

Muay Fly

Track Breakdown

Each of the four choruses has eight big beats. There are also big beats in the verses occurring right after the string section solo.

Scratch

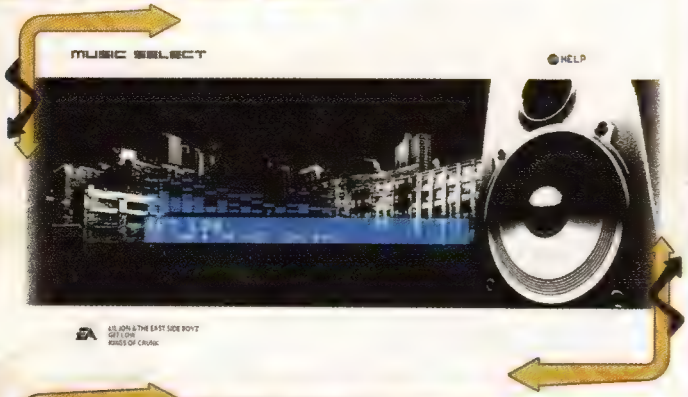
To the start of the second chorus

To the middle of the third chorus

Lay the Beatdown

This song has a lot of big beats. Four chorus sections each have eight big beats over a span of only 22 seconds. Do not use takedowns during the chorus. You will not have enough time to place your opponent on a hazard and successfully get away. Use long-range throws or directional attacks to send your opponent flying into the danger zones. Evade immediately after sending your opponent toward a hazard, because there's a good chance he will be flying right back at you.

LIL JON "GET LOW"



Big Beats: 38

Fighting Styles

Muay Fly — **Jah Breaka**

Track Breakdown

Each of the five choruses has six big beats. There are some big beats in the verses when the vocalist changes. Additionally, there are two bridges in this song. The first bridge starts immediately after the second chorus at around 2 minutes. It has three big beats. The second bridge begins around 4:45 minutes, and this section has four big beats.

Scratch

To the middle of the first chorus — **To the "skeet" of the third chorus**

Lay the Beatdown

"Get Low" has the most big beats of any song in the game. There are very few wide open spaces that allow you to use DJ Turntables at your leisure, so be sharp when you try to work the wheels of steel. It is risky to use takedowns into hazards at almost any point in this song, but not impossible if you know what you're doing. Use long-range throws or directional attacks to send your opponent flying into the danger zones if you want to play it safe. The end of the song is loaded with lots of big beats, so be prepared for mayhem.

SIX WAYS TO BEAT

DECODING THE MARTIAL ARTS

Below you'll get the lowdown on every fighting style, its strengths, its weaknesses, which fighters use it, and everything in between. To understand some of the following info, however, you gotta know how to read the charts.

Each fighting style is broken into six ratings—1 being the lowest, 6 being the highest. To maintain balance, each fighting style can have a total of 21 points across the six ratings. That's 21 points, youngblood, no more, no less. That way, there won't be one fighting style with all ratings at 6 or all ratings at 1.

BEATBOXER

Strengths	*Rating*	*Weaknesses*	*Rating*
Scratch speed	6	Song switching	1
Grab speed	6	Directional counter speed	1
Grab break speed	6	Get-up speed	1

Heavily inspired by the sweet science, Beatboxing is a perfect fighting style for fighters who like taking things into their own hands...and only their hands. Beatboxing is just what it sounds like—boxing to the beat. But it's also a strong power-based fighting style.

Because Beatboxers are always using their hands, scratch speed, grab speed, and grab break speed are completely maxed out. Better still, their exceptional hand skills also make them unpredictable. Every other fighting style also incorporates kicks, making it easier for enemies to spot high or low attacks. A Beatboxer's attacks always originate from the arms, making him harder to read. Think about it. If every attack comes from the arms, how can you consistently tell if it's coming high or low?

FIGHTING AS

Fighting as a Beatboxer is tougher than you think. You gotta know how to box to make it as a Beatboxer. Use strong punch combinations like left-right and left-right-left combos. As you attack, mix it up high and low evenly. Beatboxers are particularly strong against balanced fighting techniques like Ghetto Blaster and Black Panther.

Players who've spent time playing *Fight Night Round 3* will feel right at home as Beatboxers.

FIGHTING AGAINST

Taking out a Beatboxer is a lot like playing a cat-and-mouse game where the mouse puts a mean hurt on you. No joke, a Beatboxer is tough as nails and can switch up his combos in no time. Avoid his grab attempts and make every attempt to get him on the ground. Once a Beatboxer is on the floor, stomp him. Beatboxers are among the most susceptible to environmental hazards. Beatboxers will have a harder time beating quick martial artists like Muay Fly and Jah Breaka fighters.

BEATBOXER ROSTER

Big Boi
Big Herc
Fat Joe
Mike Jones
Sticky Fingaz

BLACK PANTHER

Strengths	Rating	Weaknesses	Rating
Scratch speed	4	Song switching	3
Grab speed	4	Directional counter speed	3
Grab break speed	4	Get-up speed	3

While Black Panther fighting style shares the same strengths and weaknesses as a Beatboxer, the ratings actually make Black Panther fighters a different animal altogether. Black Panther style is one of the most balanced styles. Truth is, the weaknesses and strengths only differ by a margin of one. That's it. One.

One point separates a Black Panther fighter's strengths from his weaknesses. So to say that there is one true way to declaw a Black Panther is completely wrong. Balanced fighters know how to handle themselves and are great at adapting. Be warned: Black Panther fighters don't go down easy.

FIGHTING AS

There are two types of Black Panther fighters: Those who know how to maintain the balance of give and take in a match, and those who lose...a lot. If you're going to be a Black Panther fighter, you gotta know when to block, when to counter, and when to lay into the opposition. Don't rely on one skill too much or you'll only end up playing into your opponent's strengths. Because this style has decent directional counter speed and good grab speed, Black Panther style is great against quick styles like Muay Fly and Jah Breaka.

FIGHTING AGAINST

Yeah, sure, they may be balanced, but they ain't unbeatable. A Black Panther fighter is often very reserved in how he attacks. He'll analyze your technique and flip the script on you. To make matters worse, he can incorporate his environment into his attack easier than most. Beat a Black Panther fighter by making him rely on one thing too much. If you're constantly throwing him across the venue, he'll have to rely too much on grab breaks. If you overpower him with stand-alone

directional attacks, he'll have to rely on reversals. Once you make a Black Panther fighter one-dimensional, he's all yours. Power-based styles like Beatboxers and Street Kwon Do are great against Black Panthers.

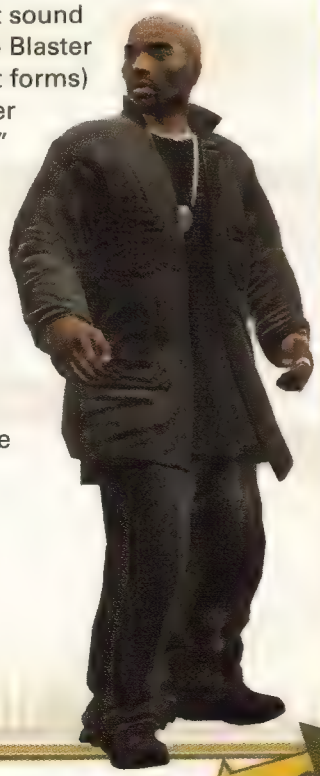
BLACK PANTHER ROSTER

Boyd	**Redman**
Dr. Chang	**The Game**
E-40	**Young Jeezy**

GHETTO BLASTER

Strengths	*Rating*	*Weaknesses*	*Rating*
Song switching	4	Scratch speed	3
Directional counter speed	4	Grab speed	3
Get-up speed	4	Grab break speed	3

Even though its name makes it sound like it's all about power, Ghetto Blaster (the second of the balanced art forms) is a finesse form. Ghetto Blaster fighters require a good "touch" to handle well.



Using a good mix of grab attacks, strong strikes, and scratching is typical Ghetto Blaster style. Don't get the wrong idea, though. The style is called Ghetto Blaster for a reason; they make very good use of the music blasting in the background.

FIGHTING AS

Ghetto Blaster fighters live and die by the streets, so they also rely on the streets for their strength. That said, rely on the background beats to lay down the pain. Use scratch techniques, grabs, and an overall balanced attack to slowly but surely whittle down your opponent. Ghetto Blaster fighters have an easier time against quick styles like Muay Fly and Jah Breaka.

FIGHTING AGAINST

You wanna beat down a Ghetto Blaster? Take his beat away. Switch the song and take away his primary advantage. If he can't use his scratching skills to their fullest advantage, he's at a disadvantage the entire fight. The good thing is that he's weak at song-switching, so once you're in a groove with your own track, you can easily maintain momentum. Most Ghetto Blasters have a tough time squaring off against Beatboxers and Street Kwon Do fighters.

GHETTO BLASTER ROSTER

Greer
Jim Jones
Johnny Nunez
Method Man
Tego

JAH BREAKA

Strengths	*Rating*	*Weaknesses*	*Rating*
Song switching	6	Scratch speed	1
Directional counter speed	6	Grab speed	1
Get-up speed	6	Grab break speed	1

Jah Breaka fighters are speed demons. Their art form is perfect for picking away at opponents. They can switch songs quickly, but are slow to activate hazards. That means that they usually just rely on their counter techniques and striking.

Jah Breaka is one of the most unbalanced fighting techniques available. Fighters are fast to lay quick strike combos, but really slow to grab, grab break, or scratch. Only advanced players need apply to this school of fighting.

FIGHTING AS

If you're gonna be a Jah Breaka, rest assured that you won't be kept down. The enemy might knock you down every now and then, but you'll be on your feet before your opponent can get close enough to cause more damage. If you study the art of Jah Breaka, be prepared to cause the most damage after blocking and countering directional attacks. Jah Breaka fighters can definitely hold their own against Beatboxers and Street Kwon Do fighters.

FIGHTING AGAINST

Beating down a Jah Breaka fighter requires patience. He can strike, back off, and quickly strike again before you know it. So knowing when to spring on a Jah Breaka fighter is the key to winning. Don't try to overpower him; he'll only use his counters on you and make you look like a fool. Don't fight a ground war with a Jah Breaka fighter; he's too quick and will get up in no time. So how do you win? Easy, youngblood, let him come to you.

You'll quickly see a Jah Breaka's intentions as he approaches; he wears his intentions like a cheap tattoo. So when a Jah Breaka gets in close, do like a cheap tattoo and make him look bad. Jah Breaka fighters are particularly weak against balanced styles like Ghetto Blaster and Black Panther.

JAH BREAKA ROSTER

Dae Dae
Kano
Sean Paul
Troy Dollar

MUAY FLY

Strengths	*Rating*	*Weaknesses*	*Rating*
Song switching	5	Scratch speed	2
Directional counter speed	5	Grab speed	2
Get-up speed	5	Grab break speed	2

Derived from traditional Muay Thai boxing and adapted by street brawlers, Muay Fly is an extremely fast and deceptively powerful martial art form. Though its strengths are rooted in speed and countering, Muay Fly fighters can hold their own in most any kind of match.

More often than not, Muay Fly fighters will rely on their strengths to get them through a pinch, but find that their skills are just well rounded enough to be slightly more adaptable than their speedy Jah Breaka counterparts.

FIGHTING AS

Muay Fly is by far one of the most fun martial arts. Good choice, young buck. Muay Fly is a fighting style for big kids. With just enough speed to land quick strike combos and enough power to cause significant damage, you can approach a fight with multiple strategies. Chop down your opponent little by little or counter off blocks to keep momentum in your favor. No matter what, the song switching speed grants you a boost in almost every fight. It's really up to you how well you use this speed-based style. Power-based styles like Beatboxer and Street Kwon Do will have a hard time defending against Muay Fly.

FIGHTING AGAINST

The first step in defeating a Muay Fly fighter is to rob him of his music boost. Once that's in your favor, keep him from switching back by throwing him into hazards as much as possible. He may be able to get up quickly, but if you time your throws well, the damage will be done. When he is within range of striking distance, grapple him again and put a pounding on him.

Balanced fighting styles are a Muay Fly fighter's worst enemy. Go with Ghetto Blaster or Black Panther to get the advantage.

MUAY FLY ROSTER

Lil Jon
Ludacris
Paul Wall
Wheatly

STREET KWON DO

Strengths	*Rating*	*Weaknesses*	*Rating*
Scratch speed	5	Song switching	2
Grab speed	5	Directional counter speed	2
Grab break speed	5	Get-up speed	2

They don't call it Tae Kwon Do on the street; they call it Street Kwon Do. Regardless of what they call it, it's one of the most powerful art forms available to young thugs. This kick-heavy fighting style is perfect for causing major damage from a safe distance.

More often than not, wannabe hustla's find themselves on the ground or on the other side of the venue after being blindsided by a Street Kwon Do fighter's attacks.

FIGHTING AS

The first and most important rule of Street Kwon Do is don't get knocked down. Your get-up speed is weak, often leaving you grounded and vulnerable to more damage. To defend against this, use your superior grab skills and extremely dangerous kicks to separate yourself from the other fighter. Maintain a strong and constant offensive when using Street Kwon Do. A well-timed kick or perfectly timed throw can be the difference between life or death.

FIGHTING AGAINST

If you've ever faced off against a strong Street Kwon Do fighter, then you know what to expect. A Street Kwon Do fighter grabs, kicks, and usually tries to fight you on his terms. Don't let him. Get in fast and get out. Pick away at him the way he would like to pick away at you, but instead of keeping him at a distance, keep him on the ground. Once he's on the ground, pound away. To maximize damage counter a Street Kwon Do fighter's attacks and send him into hazards as often as possible. Because Street Kwon Do is a power style, it is vulnerable to quick styles like Muay Fly and Jah Breaka.

STREET KWON DO ROSTER

Bun B **Ghostface Killah** **T.I.**

Fast Hal **Stan the Stalker**

FIGHTING STYLE OVERVIEW

Fighting Style	*Directional Counter Speed*	*Get-Up Speed*	*Grab Speed*	*Grab Break Speed*	*Scratch Speed*	*Song Switch Speed*	*Total*	*Fighting Class*
Beatboxer	1	1	6	6	6	1	21	Power
Black Panther	3	3	4	4	4	3	21	Balanced
Ghetto Blaster	4	4	3	3	3	4	21	Balanced
Jah Breaka	6	6	1	1	1	6	21	Speed
Muay Fly	5	5	2	2	2	5	21	Speed
Street Kwon Do	2	2	5	5	5	2	21	Power

FIGHTING CLASS OVERVIEW

Power	Speed	Balanced
Excellent scratch	**Poor scratch**	Average scratch
Excellent grab	**Poor grab**	Average grab
Excellent grab break	**Poor grab break**	Average grab break
Slow song switch	**Excellent song switch**	Average song switch
Slow get-up time	**Excellent get-up time**	Average get-up time
Slow counterpunching off blocks	**Excellent counterpunching off blocks**	Average counterpunching off blocks

BRAWLER'S PLAYGROUNDS

You've got your fighting skills down, picked a fighting style, and even nailed down a strategy for each song. But are you ready to take it to the street...or the Club...or the Penthouse?

This chapter gives you everything you need to plan out your attack in any of the eight venues. Read up, take notes, and take a good long look at the venues. They can be your best friends or your worst enemies.

THE GAS STATION—FUEL THE FIRE

Hazard	Damage
Left Gas Pump	9.0
Right Gas Pump	9.0
Car Wash Roller	8.0
Fire Extinguisher	1.0
Left Gas-Cap Blast	6.0
Right Gas-Cap Blast	6.0
Gas-Cap Hit	7.0

INTERLUDE

Each hit's damage is calculated by how many bars of health it depletes. A damage rating of 1.0 means you, or preferably some busta', loses one bar of health with a direct hit from the hazard. If the hit is more of a glancing blow than a direct one, the damage will be less.

The car wash at the Gas Station is always malfunctioning, so watch out for the large roller brush—it's likely to pop out and smack a fighter upside his head. If you want to do some serious damage to an opponent, though, destroy the gas pump to create fiery blasts that erupt to the beat.

Destroying the gas pumps also causes the fuel caps in the middle of the ground to explode into the air on the beat. The shopkeeper keeps a fire extinguisher handy, but he's more likely to use it to keep people away from his store. Want to see him in action? Try smashing his shop window.

BLOWIN' UP

Two hazards at the Gas Station are worth exploiting. The car wash roller is one of the most useful, because it often triggers to smaller beats, which occur more often. Certain songs, like E-40's "Tell Me When to Go," can trigger the roller nearly once every second, making it a very dangerous hazard.

The second most useful hazard is the set of gas pumps. You have to destroy them first to make them useful, but once you do, you can cause major damage to your enemy by bouncing him off the pumps. In fact, why not use your opponent to destroy the pumps? Move him close to the hazards and send him flying into them with a solid blow or a throw.

THE CLUB—ENJOY THE SHOW

Hazard	Damage
Left Go-Go Dancer	8.0
Right Go-Go Dancer	8.0
Light Wall Blast	10.0
Speaker Blast	8.0
Left Falling Light	6.0
Right Falling Light	6.0

The Club has the most dangerous nightlife in town. The go-go dancers have some nice moves, but if you get too close and the beat drops, they kick you in the head. That's tame compared to the speakers on the right side of the dance floor, which can absolutely blow you away.

Destroy the big light wall on the left side of the dance floor to create a huge blast on the beat. Not even the center of the floor is safe—lights on the ceiling can shake loose and fall when the beat hits.

IT'S ON AND POPPIN'

Even though the N.Y. Club is the hottest venue around, it is still difficult getting the hazards to strike just right. The go-go dancers may cause considerable damage, but getting them to hit the other fool is tougher than you think. And to make matters worse, if you throw your opponent between the two dancers, he lands just beyond their reach.

Instead, use the speaker blasts and light wall blasts to hurt your enemy. That means that you're either on the far left or the far right of the map, where none of the other hazards can hurt you. In the end, it makes sense to use one big hazard instead of several smaller ones. Trust us on this one.

THE BLOCK—THE SOUTHERN CORNER

Hazard	Damage
Lowrider Tail Whip	10.0
Lowrider Tire Smoke	2.0
Fire Hydrant Blast	7.0
Parked Car Backfire	2.0
Fallen Power Transformer	4.0

This street comes alive to the beat. The lowrider at the end of the Block spins out on the beat and hits you hard if you get too close. The other car, on the left side of the house, backfires sometimes, so steer clear of the exhaust pipe.

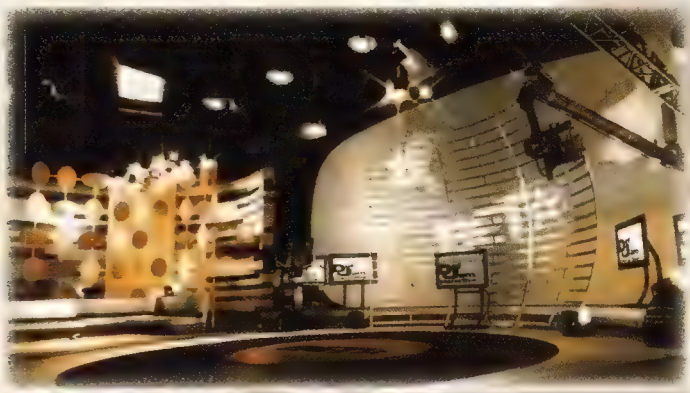
Also on the left side of the house is the telephone pole. Destroy it and you can knock the power transformer down, causing it to overload and trigger a huge blast on the beat. You can cool things down by destroying the fire hydrant near the right side of the house, which creates a huge geyser that erupts to the music.

STREET FIGHTING

This is street fighting! That means anything goes. Luckily, the Block has plenty of things to use as part of your fighting technique. The lowrider in particular is a great weapon to use when you're looking to cause major pain. Just to the left of where the lowrider pivots is a sweet spot that can create a hazard combo.

Drop your opponent to the left of the lowrider and back off. Once you're at a safe distance, scratch the beat and trigger the lowrider hazard. If you dropped your enemy in the right area, he goes flying directly toward the fire hydrant hazard.

BET: 108 & PARK—LIGHTS, CAMERA, SMASHING

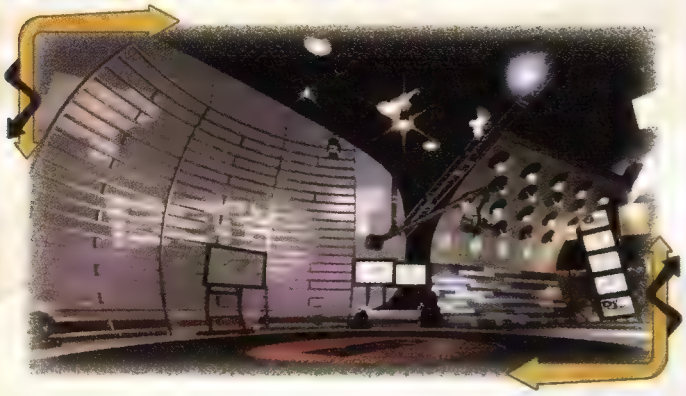


Hazard	Damage
Camera Boom	5.0
Stage Pyrotechnics	5.0
Swinging Light Rig	8.0
Broken TV Display	12.0

If only all TV were this good! Watch out for the boom camera near the center of the stage, or it'll smack you upside your dome. The stage pyrotechnics on the right side are still active and trigger every time the beat drops. Watch out for a malfunctioning light rig on the left side near the couches.

Is that it? Oh yeah, smash through the TV display in the middle of the set and create a massive lightning rod that gets charged on the beats of the music. Lights, camera, action!

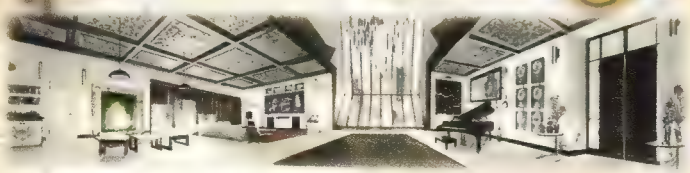
SMILE, YOU'RE ON TV



You may have wanted to be on TV once, but not like this. The studio's hazards are few, but they'll make you regret setting foot on the stage. Of the four hazards, the camera boom and pyrotechnics are the easiest to incorporate into combination attacks. They don't send your opponent flying across the studio, so you can easily intercept your enemy as he stumbles, and land a few more strikes.

The main damage-dealers, however, are perfect for finishing off opponents. While fighting near the center of the studio, grab your enemy and toss him toward the swinging light rig. When it comes down, he gets tossed right back at you or near you. Approach him as he lands and introduce him to the bottom of your boot.

THE PENTHOUSE—WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY



Hazard	Damage
Sound System	7.0
Shattered Piano	8.0
Fireplace Blast	7.0
Left Falling Fire Debris	7.5
Right Falling Fire Debris	7.5
Penthouse Window	100.0

The Penthouse has a kicking sound system on the right wall with the turntables. It can really knock you off your feet. If you want to turn up the heat, smash the fireplace on the left side to create a flamethrower that fires on the beat.

The fire can spread, so watch out for falling debris as the Penthouse goes up in flames. Before it does, make sure you check out the Penthouse window. Not only does it have a great view but if you time it right, you can also end the fight in a hurry by tossing your opponent out of it.

INTERVENE

To throw you opponent out the window, you must first "shatter" the window. Once it is shattered, time the impact of the throw with the beat (when the windows move or bulge in sync with the big beat). This is the only way to ring out an opponent in the Penthouse.

GET THINGS HOT!

If you're having a tough time sending the enemy out the window, wait until it is nearly completely shattered, then set the Penthouse ablaze. Once the fire reaches the window, maneuver your opponent near it and throw him right out. See ya'; wouldn't wanna be ya'!

EXECUTIVE SUITE—SOUND AND FURY

Hazard	Damage
Speaker Wall	10.0
Safe Door	8.0
Left Falling Debris	6.0
Right Falling Debris	6.0
Steam Pipe Blast	7.0
Elevator Shaft	100.0

The Executive Suite has the ultimate sound system within the recessed wall behind the desk. It's so powerful it can shake the whole building to pieces. If things get hectic enough, a heating pipe might break through the wall and rubble can start falling from the ceiling.

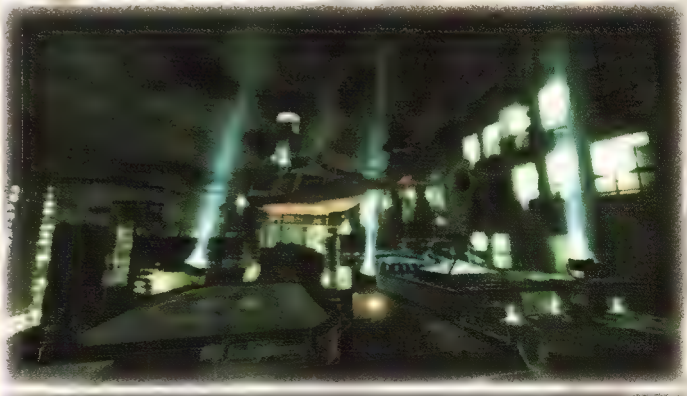
Smash through the trophy case on the left side of the venue and see what treasures await. Finally, be careful around the private elevator. Once it's broken, it offers a quick one-way trip to the ground floor.

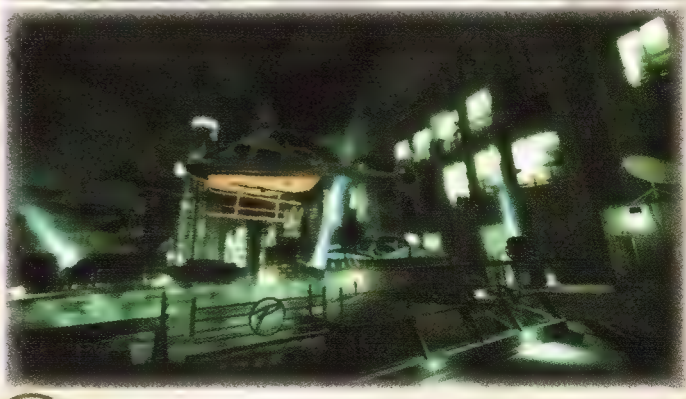
ELEVATOR GOING DOWN

Throwing your enemy down the elevator shaft is harder than it seems. You gotta get perfect timing down before you even try. By scratching, you can create a big beat and cause the elevator to open, but if you throw your enemy too close to the elevator, he just bounces off the wall.

Back a way from the doors a bit, create a big beat by scratching, and then send your opponent flying toward the elevator door. If you time it right, he's in the lobby real quick.

THE ROOF—EVADE THE BLADE



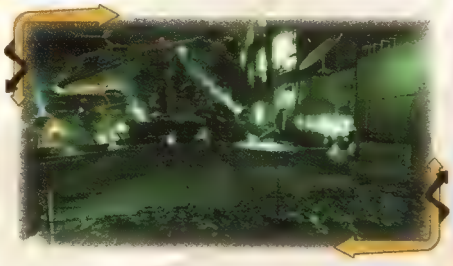


Hazard	Damage
Helicopter	12.0
Electrical Hazard	8.0
A/C Fans	8.0
Steam Pipe Blast	5.0

The helicopter will take you for a ride, so be careful not to get too close to the Roof's railing, especially if the beat is coming. Be careful around the fuse box on the right side—that big puddle on the ground could be dangerous if the fuse box gets smashed. Other things to look out for when they get wrecked are the industrial-strength A/C vents on the left side and the steam pipe on the right.

By far the most dangerous of hazards is the helicopter's tail rotor. Once it drops to the beat it can send you flying across the roof as if you were on the helicopter. The only difference between riding and getting smacked is that getting smacked has a much rougher landing.

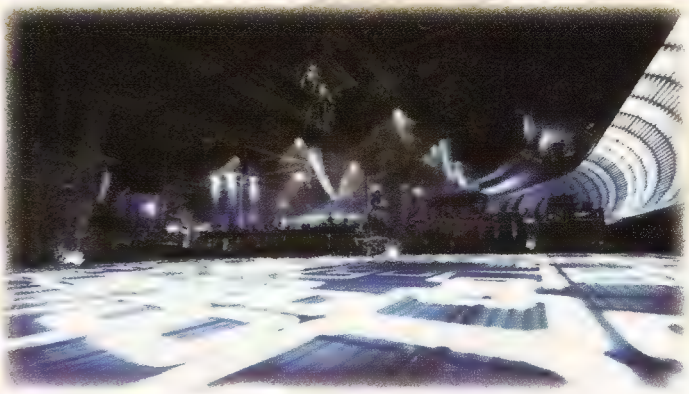
LIGHT 'EM UP!



Don't underestimate the power of the electrical hazard. The helicopter blades might be the obvious choice for hazard damage, but the electrical hazard can be a smart brawler's best asset on the Roof. Back your enemy into the corner by the electrical box and pound him into it to bust the box open.

Once the box is open, use a takedown to drop the fool and back off. As he gets up, set off the electrical hazard with the DJ controls. When the hazard sends him flying into the nearby wall, approach him again to continue the fight. Only this time, use the wall to launch wall attacks, too.

THE AFTER HOURS—LIGHT IT UP

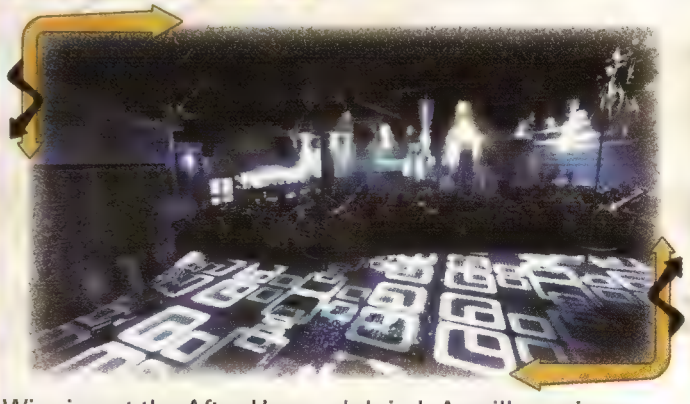


Hazard	Damage
Left Go-Go Dancer	8.0
Right Go-Go Dancer	8.0
Light Wall Blast	10.0
Speaker Blast	8.0
Left Falling Light	6.0
Right Falling Light	6.0

If you want to fight in the hottest nightclub in town, you have to work your way up in Build a Label mode to unlock this thumpin' L.A. venue.

Once it's unlocked and you set foot on it, don't get too close to the go-go dancers. They may draw you in, but once you're at their feet, you're at their mercy. Much like the Club in N.Y., the walls, lighting fixtures, and speakers can cause damage in no time. Watch your back.

BOUNCE WITH ME



Winning at the After Hours club in L.A. will require a similar strategy to winning at the Club in N.Y. Use the walls more than you rely on the falling fixtures or go-go dancers.

Remember, though, that the light wall and speakers are reversed here. The speakers are on the right and the light wall is on the left. Knowing where specific hazards are will help you plan your attack.

BRAWLERS

BIG HERC

Brawler	*Fighting Style*	*Default Song 1*	*Default Song 2*
Big Herc	Beatboxer	"We Fly High" by Jim Jones	"Make It Rain" by Fat Joe

Big Herc is everything that's wrong with the industry. He's untrustworthy, untalented, and doesn't waste time making other people's beats his own. He's got a big head and won't waste time to throw down, so be ready whenever you come across him.

Big Herc is the first fighter you face in Build a Label Mode. Though he's not one of the toughest opponents you'll face, he's got mad Beatboxing skills.

BIG BOI

Brawler	*Fighting Style*	*Default Song 1*	*Default Song 2*
Big Boi	Beatboxer	"Kryptonite" By Purple Ribbon All-Stars	"What's That Smell" by Konkrete

Big Boi (born Antwan André Patton on February 1, 1975 in Savannah, Georgia) is an American hip hop artist and producer; one half of the successful and alternative Hip Hop duo OutKast. He also goes by the aliases "Daddy Fat Sacks," "General Patton," "Sir Lucious L. Leftfoot," "Billy Ocean," "Hot Tub Tony," and "Francis the Savannah Chitlin' Pimp."

He was born and spent the first half of his childhood in Savannah, attending Herschel V. Jenkins High School (as shown on Behind the Music) before moving to Georgia's capital of Atlanta. He had a strong interest in hip hop music, and met André "André 3000" Benjamin while attending Tri Cities High School in the late-1980s. The two eventually joined forces as OutKast and signed with LaFace Records.

In contrast to his more sedate, philosophical partner, Patton's on-record persona enjoys partying and employs a more pimp-like mentality. He can be identified by his rapid-fire delivery and intensely intricate rhymes, a style which has become more distinct since the album <I>ATLiens<I>. Patton is also the more direct member of the team, and has often used his lyrics to criticize the problems that plague both the African American community and the world. One example is 2002's "War," a scathing attack on the Bush administration and the "war on terror."

In addition to his work on much OutKast and Dungeon Family-related material, Patton has also been featured on other artists' tracks without André 3000. His most notable guest appearances were on the 1999 Missy Elliott hit, "All N My Grill," the Youngbloodz' "85 South," and Trick Daddy's 2001 single "In Da Wind."

After four increasingly successful albums as a duo, Benjamin decided to make a solo album as a side project. Patton also produced a solo effort, and the two albums were packaged together as *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below* in 2003. *Speakerboxxx* anchored the release with the original OutKast style, and was the half to receive the most recognition from the hip-hop audience. One song from each album was released in September 2003 as a single.

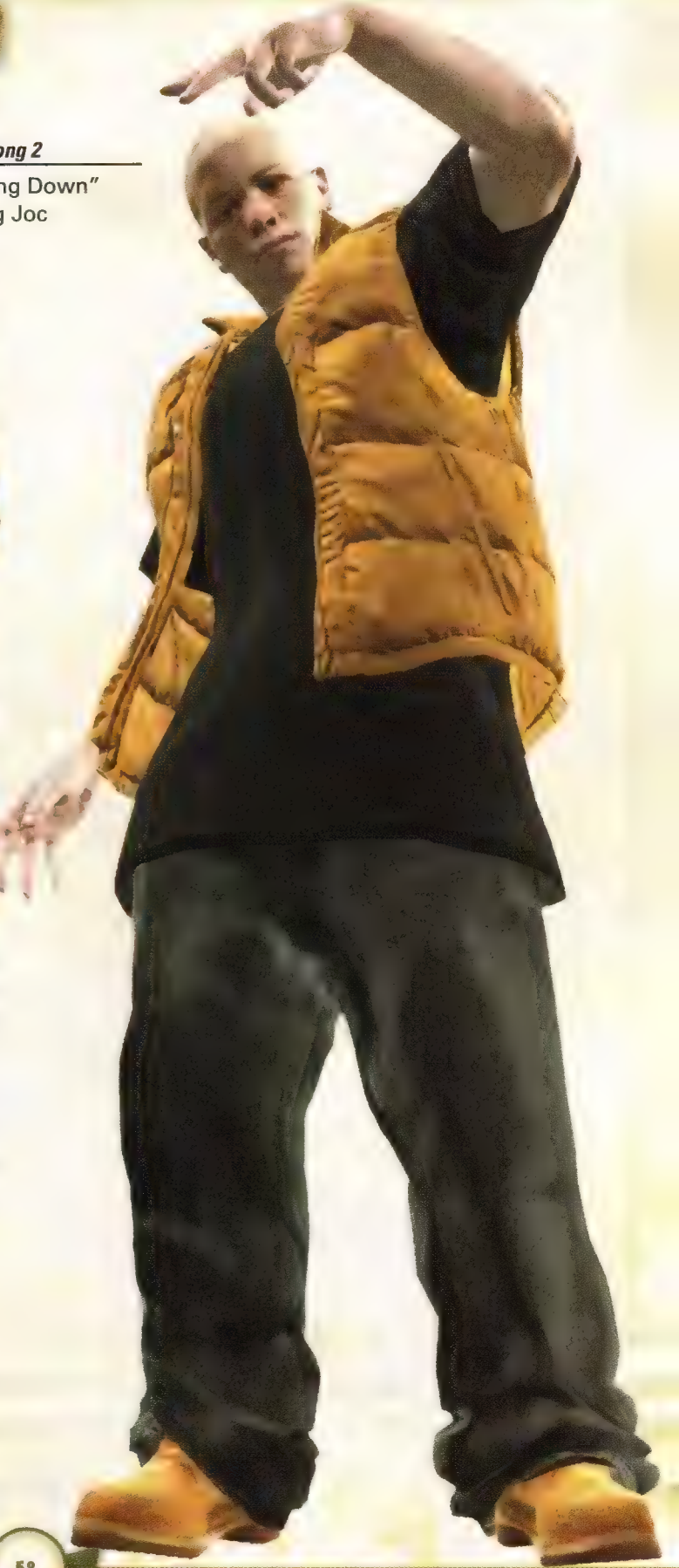
Patton's choice was the single "The Way You Move", featuring Sleepy Brown. It was originally supported by urban radio, but then crossed over to pop charts and became almost as big a pop hit as Benjamin's "Hey Ya!". "The Way You Move" supplanted "Hey Ya!" as the #1 song on the US pop charts, one of the few times in music history a group has replaced itself at the top of the charts. The second single from Big Boi's side of the album was "Ghetto Musick", which featured both members of OutKast and a sample from Patti LaBelle's "Love, Need & Want You."

Patton and Benjamin star in <I>Idlewild<I>, a film about music in the Depression-era South. It was released in August 2006. Patton also has plans in the works for a solo album under the moniker "Hot Tub Tony", and a group project partnering him with Sleepy Brown. He released his new album, <I>Got Purp? Vol 2<I>, with the Purple Ribbon All-Stars in November 2005 on Purple Ribbon Records, as Aquemeni Records was re-named after Benjamin left the company. The group is a collective of Dungeon Family artists. The first single from the album was "Kryptonite", which cracked the Billboard Hot 100 and was a hit on Hip Hop radio. Patton is currently featured on the song "Hood Boy" which is the first single off of Fantasia's new album.

He is married to Sherlita Patton, with whom he has two children: a daughter, Jordan, and a son, Bamboo. His oldest son, Antwan Jr., is not Sherlita's child. Numerous references to the Patton family are present in Big Boi's rhymes. His younger brother James raps under the name "Lil' Brotha", and is a member of hip-hop group Konkrete. Big Boi also appeared on Nick Cannon's Wildin Out Season 3 as one of the many guest stars, as well as guest starring and appearing as a musical guest on Chappelle's Show.

BOYD, THE CORRUPT COP

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Boyd	Black Panther	"Ante Up" by M.O.P.	"It's Going Down" by Young Joc



Every department's got one...or two...or three. But when your department has a man like Lt. Frank Wheatly, you're bound to find an entire corrupt police force. Functioning as one of his many badge-carrying goons, Boyd is as corrupt a cop as they come.

Boyd isn't afraid to get dirty, either. He'll step up when you're ready to throw down and will often pick a fight in Build a Label Mode. Watch out for him. He'll come at you hard and fast; when he does, greet him with your fist and say goodbye with your boot.

BUN B

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Bun B	Street Kwon Do	"Top Back" by T.I.	"Trill" by Paul Wall

Until recently, there were only a few MC's from Texas who would get any sort of shine outside the borders of their nation-sized republic. Few meaning three. One of course would be Scarface, who with his group the Geto Boys laid the initial foundation for the phenomenon that is southern rap. Two would have to be Devin the Dude, a laid back artist who crossed over to the edge of the mainstream with his work with Dr. Dre, De La Soul and The Roots. And three would have to be UGK, the group that inspired an entire region to take the rap game seriously.

Before UGK hit the scene in the early 90's, the pickings were slim for folks looking for authentic hip-hop in the south. The southeast was overtaken with party rockin' booty music, Texas was known for the Geto Boys almost exclusively and the bounce scene in Louisiana hadn't yet been noticed nationally.

Hailing from Port Arthur, Texas, the Underground Kings—UGK for short—brought the major labels to the state back in the summer of 1991. Rappers Bun B and Pimp C—who also handled the production for the duo and set all new standards for beatmaking in the south—had been dabbling in the rap game in other groups throughout the 80's. However when they clicked up, they created a sound so powerful that the entire music industry had to listen.

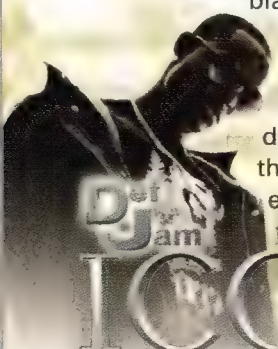
"We had labels that like, aren't even around anymore," Bun B explains from his new home on the south side of Houston, "like Select Records, Priority Records, we had all the labels calling for us at that time. Our first tape sold 40-50,000 copies independently, and there wasn't even a movement for that type of shit. We were selling gangsta' music independently. So the labels had their little bidding war going on, and we played hardball with all of them until Jive came with what seemed like the best deal."

Their first tape, The Southern Way contained the monster hit, "Tell Me Something Good," that borrowed heavily from the Rufus and Chaka Khan hit of the same name. That single, released by Russell Washington's Big Tyme Records—a label and also a record shop in Houston's King's Flea Market—was first heard on a Houston radio contest called Houston Home Jams. Over the course of two weeks, the song dominated the contest, but UGK was disqualified when their label began pressing up the single and selling it.

"But people kept calling the station to hear the song again," Bun continues, "and 97.9 the Box added it. The rest is history."

Upon signing to Jive it looked as though UGK were about to run the rap game. But at the time, as much as the major labels wanted to cash in on the potential of rap music coming from the south, they really didn't respect anything that wasn't from New York or Los Angeles.

"I think they thought we were good doing what we were," Bun remembers, "but it was best to not spend a lot of money on it because it probably wasn't gonna break. That whole thing was based upon assumptions and the fact that we were asking, 'Why don't we do promo in New York? Why don't we do promo in LA?' They'd say 'New York is not gonna buy your stuff anyway and in LA they don't like guys like that and blah blah blah.'"



Oh how times have changed. While UGK may have never gotten the respect in the music industry that they deserved, the duo was undisputedly known throughout the south as one of the realest rap groups ever, with Bun B being regarded as one of the top lyricists ever to touch the game.

Fast forward to the year 2000. After three releases on Jive—*Too Hard to Swallow*, *Super Tight*, and *Ridin' Dirty*—UGK's name was growing everyday. But it wasn't until Jay-Z called, to get the duo on his #1 hit "Big Pimpin'" that they really began to soar. "We had more eyes looking at us and what were about to do than we ever had before in our career." Bun says, "We had a Grammy nomination behind us, #1 on TRL, #1 on BET, all these different things, there was a million and one good looks in our corner. And it was just a matter of putting out good music behind it and we put the good music together and then just ended up getting sidetracked."

The good music he's talking about became the album Dirty Money, their last effort as a group. The sidetracking he's talking about it the fact that his partner of over 10 years was soon after locked up, for potentially eight years. In the time since Pimp's incarceration, Bun B has stayed busy as one of the most in demand feature artists in Hip Hop. Working everyday to keep his group and his partner's name alive, Bun has recorded with such hip-hop luminaries as Lil Jon, Beanie Siegel, Scarface, T.I., Pitbull, Nas, Jadakiss, Mannie Fresh, Three Six Mafia, and the list goes on and on.

"I've worked three years myself to keep the team alive." Bun reflects, "You have to realize, Pimp is doing his share. He's doing his time good, he's not getting into shit, he's doing his time like a man's supposed to do his time. He's been doing his time 100 inside so I gotta do everything 100 outside. And when Pimp comes home, I feel like it's as good a look if not a better look than "Big Pimpin'." But until then, Bun is staying busy with his side group MDDL FNGZ and his solo debut, *Trill*, released on Rap-A-Lot Records in October 2005.

Trill hits from start to finish like a street sweeper on blast. The hardest record to come out of hip-hop's hottest region this year features cuts like the first single "Draped Up," produced by Salih Williams (the man behind "Still Tippin'," "Back Then," and "Sittin' Sideways") and the anthemic KLC produced track "Bun." If you didn't know him before, you will now.

And the feature king has called in a few of his favorite partners to lace his record as well. The hard hitting "I'm A G" features T.I., and the upbeat Maximillion track "How I Get Down" features Petey Pablo. Pimp C pops up alongside Z-ro on the Mr. Lee–produced "Get Thowed," and the Jazze Pha produced "Diamonds on My Chest" is a sure shot hit.

Bun's got a few more surprises in the bag that he can't let out just yet—just know that Rap-A-Lot released another classic from yet another of the top MCs in the game.

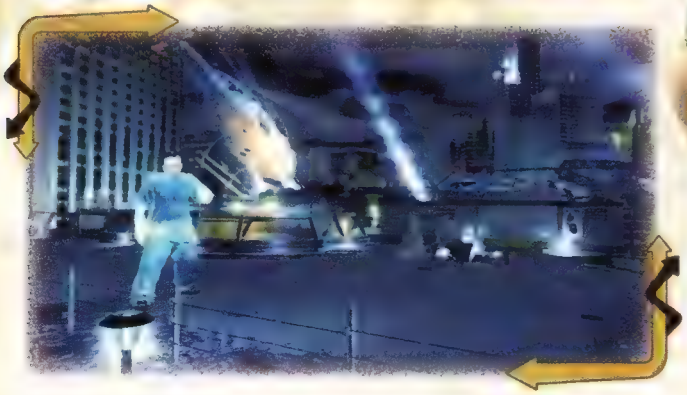
DAE DAE

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Dae Dae	Jah Breaka	"Tell Me When to Go" by E-40	"I Do This" by Young Jeezy

Dae Dae is Troy Dollar's right-hand man and top producer, and his methods come straight from the CEO himself: threatening, aggressive, and violent. In fact, if anything, Dae Dae takes them to an extent Troy is smart enough to avoid, at least publicly. He's over-confident, easily angered, and has an over-inflated sense of self-worth and importance. He thinks he's sharper than he really is, but he makes sure no one feels comfortable enough to correct him on anything—in his mind, he's never wrong.

DR. CHANG

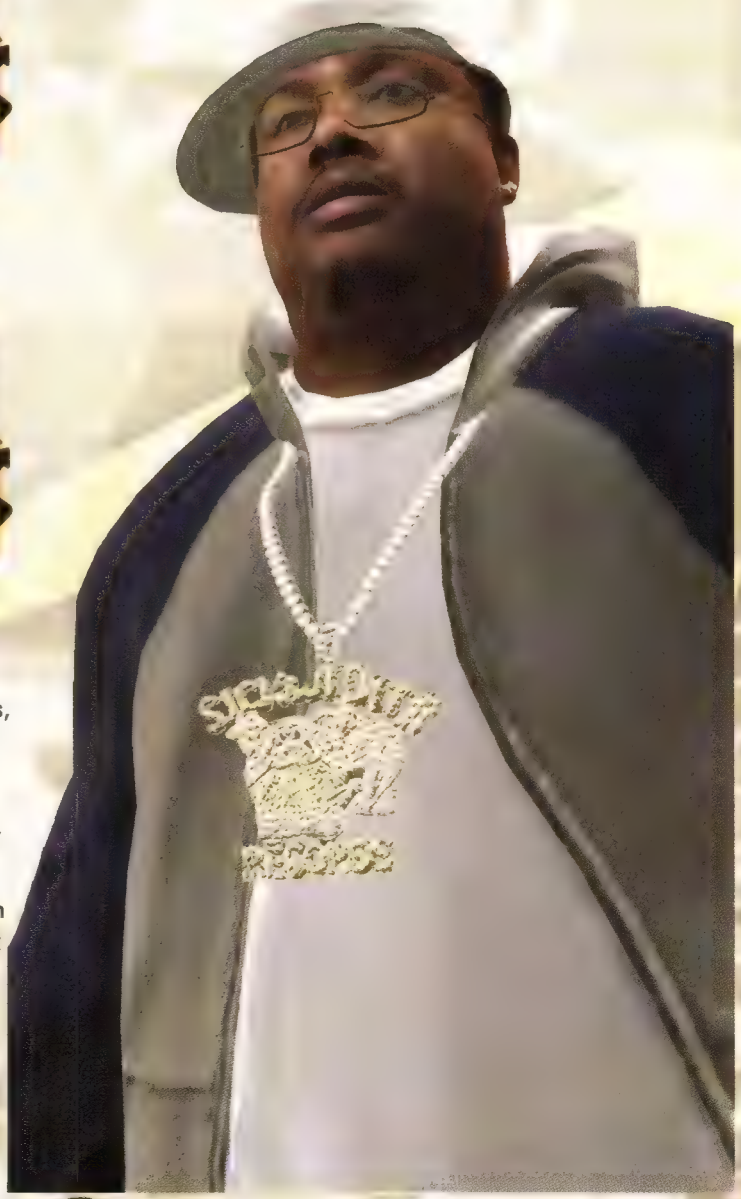
Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Dr. Chang	Black Panther	"Ante Up" by M.O.P.	"Kryptonite" by Purple Ribbon All-Stars



Dr Chang runs the backroom medical center that services L.A.'s hip-hop underground. He's incredibly good at his "medical art," even if his facilities seem rundown and ragged. There's no arguing his talent, even if a tragedy in the past forbids him from ever practicing his skills legitimately again. He has a tight sense of humor, and a confidence that keeps him above whatever opinions others might have of his practice. He knows what he can do, and knows that people need him to do it, so he can be as cocky and smart-mouthed as he wants to be. And when words fail, he can pull a few surprising moves of his own....

E-40

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
E-40	Black Panther	"Tell Me When to Go" by E-40	"Go Hard or Go Home" by E-40



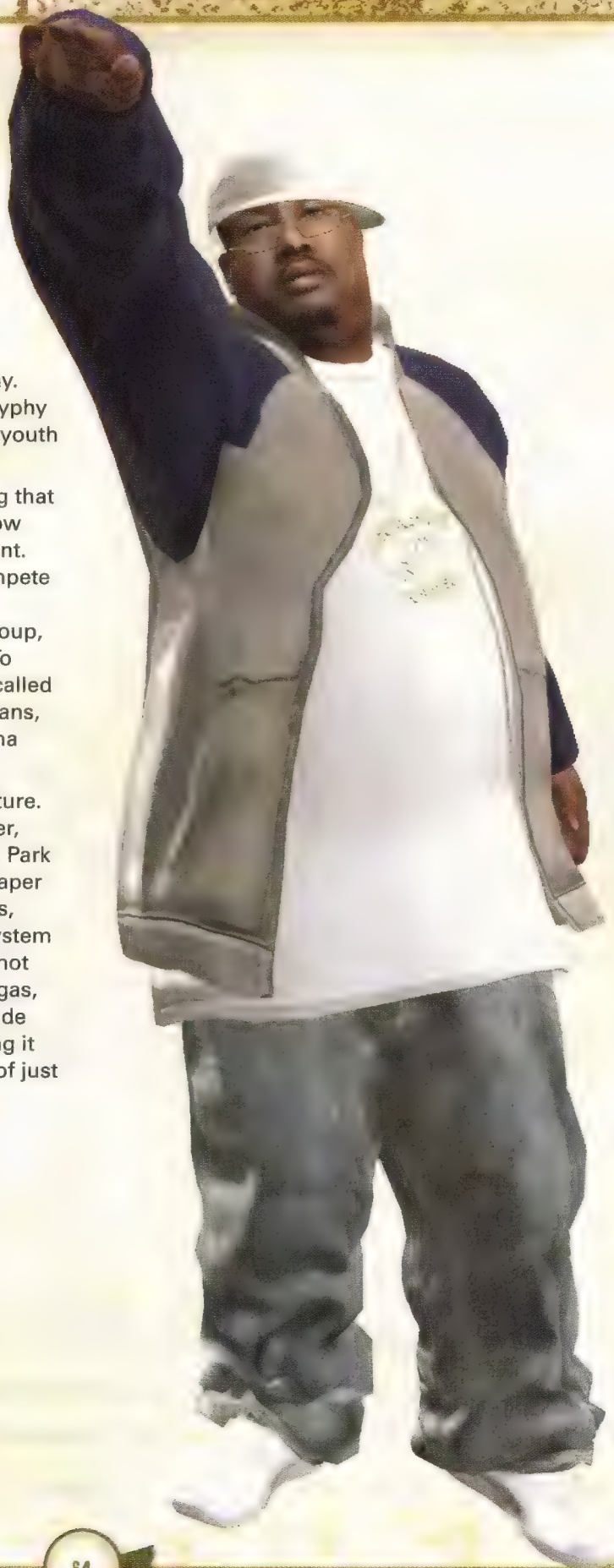
The term "legend" is not loosely thrown around in hip-hop and for good reason. There are not many rappers that fit the bill. But E-40, "The Ambassador of the Bay," is one that definitely does. After 12 albums and 15 years, three gold and one platinum album (one with his group The Click) 40 Water unleashed his patented slang and unforgettable flow to a new generation of fans with his debut album for BME Recordings/Sik Wid It/Reprise, *My Ghetto Report Card*.

It's no secret why 40 has remained current; he stays on top of the streets. "I stays woke. I like to put a new twist to what I do," says 40. "Every now and then you got to reinvent yourself by getting with these young cats, that way I stay fresh in the game. That's the secret to my longevity."

With his latest album *My Ghetto Report Card*, E-40 once again re-invents himself by introducing the nation to a movement that has been bubbling in his native Bay Area for the past few years—Hyphy. Like Crunk in Atlanta or Screw Music in Houston, Hyphy music is the sonic component of the new Bay Area youth culture.

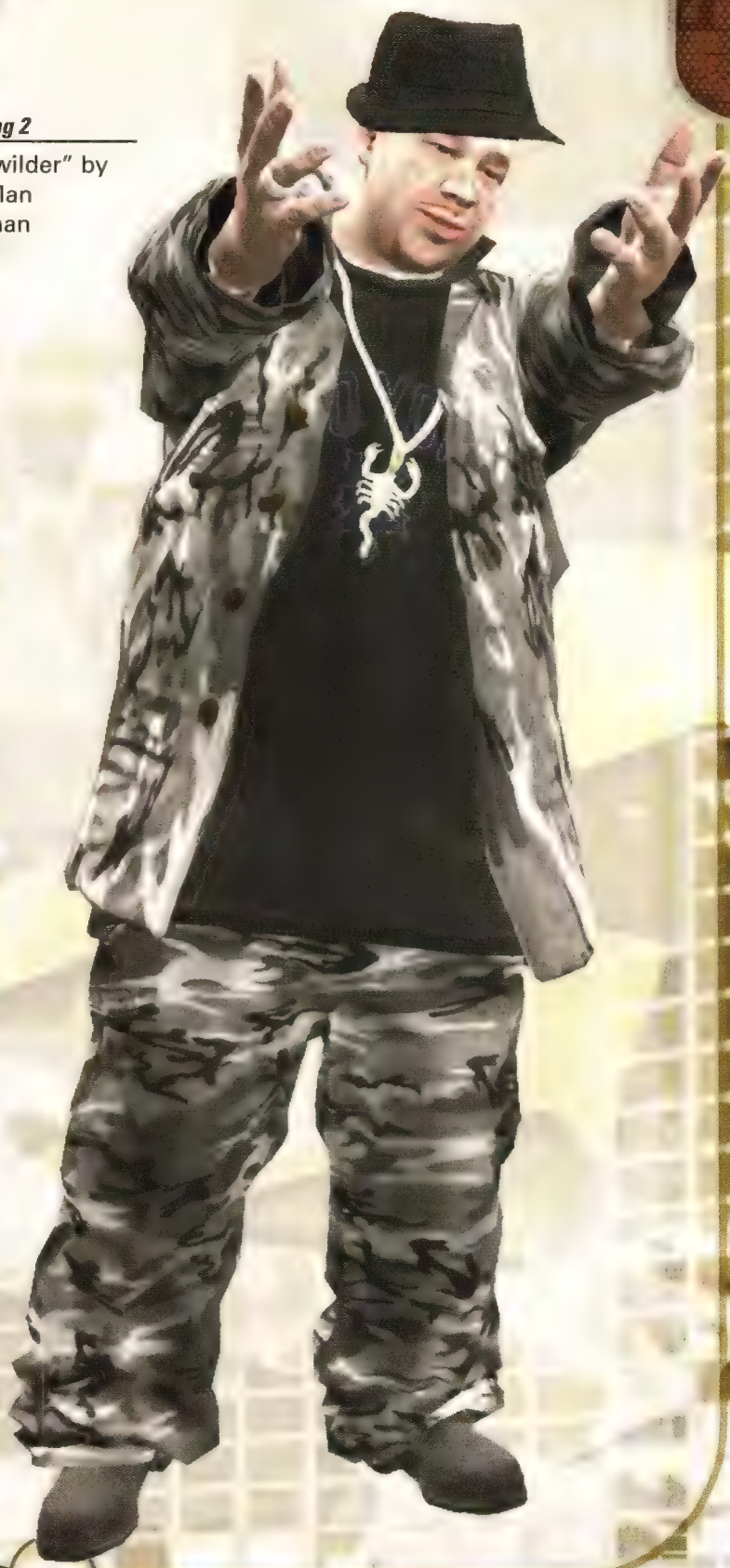
The energy of the youth created a power so strong that the music coming out of the bay was forced to follow suit, giving the streets a soundtrack to the movement. Hyphy has a dance component, where dancers compete with each other for dominance of the crowd—as displayed by the award-winning Bay Area dance group, The Animaniaks, in E-40's hit video "Tell Me When To Go." This ultra-intense form of freestyle dancing is called going dumb. The customary fashion for Hyphy is jeans, white tees, dreads and big sunglasses called "stunna shades."

Another major component of Hyphy is the car culture. The ride of choice right now in the Bay is the scraper, the classic 4-door American sedan (Buick LaSabres, Park Avenues, et al) with a hood twist. A pimped out scraper is not complete without colored tint, whistling pipes, oversized rims or spinning hubcaps and a stereo system powerful enough to knock pictures off the wall. It's not just about how the car looks though, being able to gas, brake and dip, do figure eights, donuts and ghost ride the whip (driving a car hanging out the door, making it appear as if the car is driving itself) is a major part of just how Hyphy Bay youth get.



FAST HAL

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Fast Hal	Street Kwon Do	"It's Going Down" by Young Joc	"Da Rockwilder" by Method Man and Redman



Every now and then aspiring artists will come across shady, no good, money-hungry promoters. Fast Hal is a perfect example. He's always hassling the talent for more money or withholding money he already owes them.

As you rise from street enforcer to industry Icon in Build a Label Mode, you'll come across Fast Hal plenty of times. But don't confuse his name for his skill. They don't call him fast because he's got speed, they call him fast because he's always trying to pull a fast one on your artists. But you can't get far in the business without being able to kick up dust every now and then.

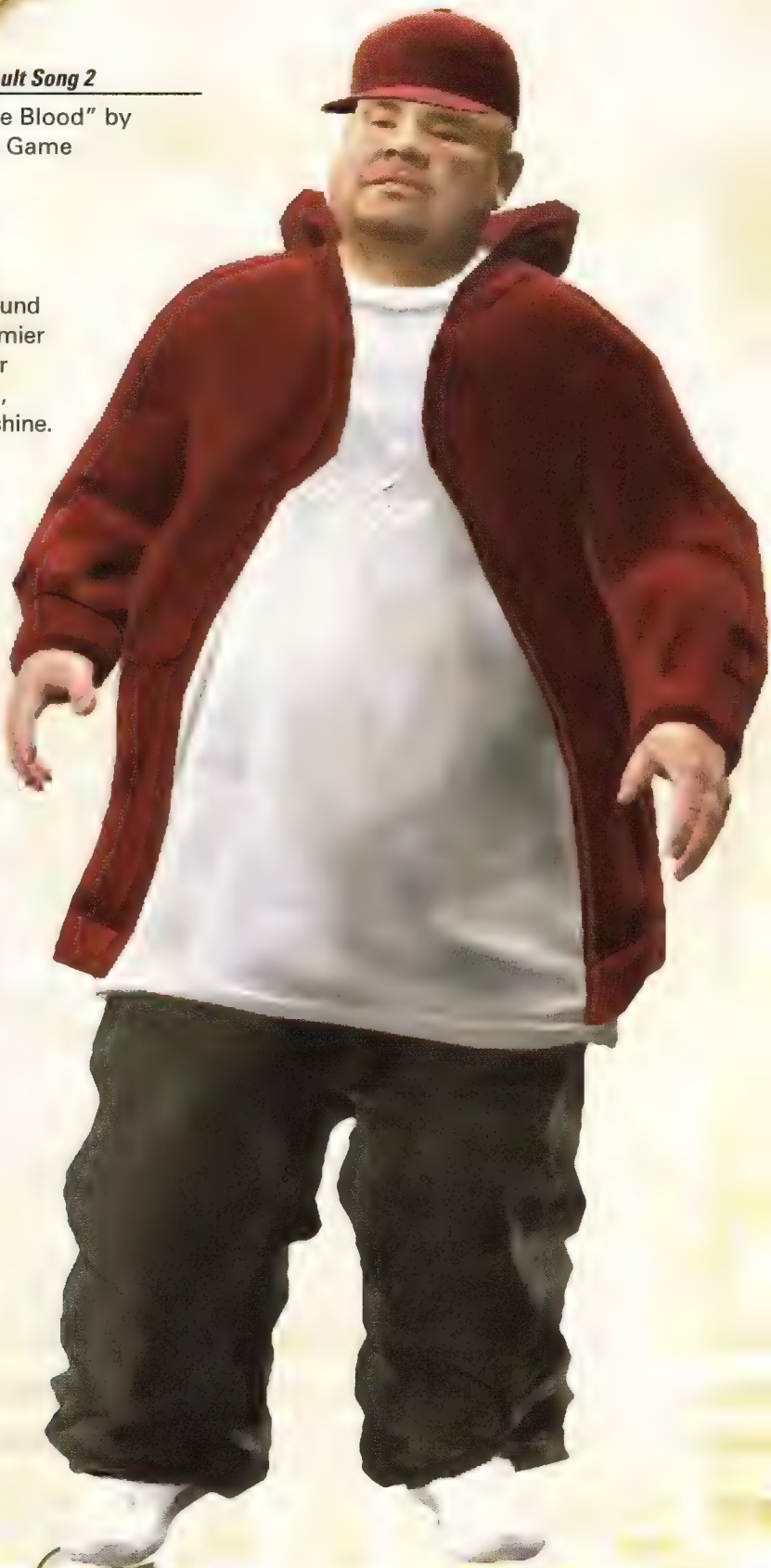
Fast Hal is a proficient Street Kwon Do fighter. He relies on his power-based technique when his own shady underhanded dealings don't get the job done.

FAT JOE

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Fat Joe	Beatboxer	"Make it Rain" by Fat Joe	"One Blood" by The Game

A little more than 13 years after releasing his debut LP, *Represent*, hip-hop legend Fat Joe is defiantly certified as one of the last of a dying breed. While many of his pioneering peers from that golden era haven't since gracefully bowed out of the game, Joe has constantly found ways to evolve over the years as not only one of the premier MCs in rap, but as an astute businessman with an ear for finding and cultivating talent such fellow legend Big Pun, female fire starter Remy Ma and R&B crooner Tony Sunshine.

Joe's business savvy has surpassed working only in music as he has also secured endorsement deals with Ecko, Pepsi, Bud light, and Boost Mobile. He has even added TV host to his credentials, serving as host for the MTV Europe's "Pimp My Ride." Joe's latest opus, *Me, Myself and I* not only finds him delivering his best album to date, but marks a milestone and next phase of his career. The project will be released independently on his own Terror Squad Entertainment, which is being distributed through imperial/EMI.



For the better part of the past decade, Joe had recorded on Atlantic, releasing a string of classic solo albums: *Don Cartagena* (1998), *Jealous Ones Still Envy* (2001), *Loyalty* (2002), and *All or Nothing* (2005). Joey Crack has also put out two albums with his crew, The Terror Squad: *Terror Squad* (1999) and *True story* (2004), which spawned one of the biggest singles in hip-hop history, "Lean Back." Throughout his career, the Bronx native has garnered a reputation for being consistent with his bodies of work and has been able to maintain unwavering street credibility while traversing the underground and blossoming into a mainstream superstar.

Still Joe needed a change as 2006 started. "I had been there for ten years," Joe explains about why he decided to leave Atlantic records earlier that year, "In the past few years I saw all these guys at [Atlantic subsidiary] Asylum records, Mike Jones, Paul Wall, Cam'ron getting independent deals. Unfortunately when I sat down with Atlantic, we couldn't agree on the terms of the deal so I decided to do on my own."

The man nicknamed Joey Crack and Coca, says he doesn't have any animosity towards Atlantic, but he still had to do what was most prudent financially for his career and decided to field offers from other companies offering distribution. Very well off from the years of grinding and subsequent success, Joe decided he was tired of having to take money from labels to make albums and shoot videos. He was capable of doing everything on his own. All he wanted was for a company to help him get his product in stores. While different labels put in staggering bids to get into business with Joe, the Don of the Terror Squad funded the production of his album and began recording on his own. The result is *Me, Myself and I*: a full throttle return to the pavement-embedded hip-hop that is one of Joe's passions.

"This album sounds like Fat Joe, gutter hip-hop," he says of the project. "It'll take you back to Digging in the crates, jealous Ones Envy, straight street. I locked myself up in the room and said 'yo, we gonna make some hot music.' I had people send me beats and said, 'yo, I'm gonna talk about what I feel, how I feel, get lyrical. I had producers, my friends say this is what I feel Fat Joe is. I love making commercial records that go pop and all that, but this how I felt this time, straight gutter.'"

Production on the project was handled by close Terror Squad affiliates like Scott Storch, LV and the Runners, while less than a handful of guests such as Lil' Wayne, The Game, and newcomer Murder Capital shared mic time with Joe.

The first single is a thunderous throw down called "Make It Rain." Scott Storch produced and Lil' Wayne chipped in the hook. Joe masterfully controls the verses, flossing his hardcore pedigree while making the club rock and celebrating lavish spending. Acclaimed filmmaker and video director Chris Robinson ("ATL") directed the clip in Miami, "That second single is 'breathe and Stop" featuring Game." He describes of another cut, which has a strong Caribbean feel to it, "That Caribbean rudeboy music is some of the most powerful, spiritual music you can find. That's music that automatically makes you move. It commands you to feel a certain way."

The street singles "Damm" and "No Drama (Clap and Revolve)" were leaked to the street and quickly became fixtures on the mixtape circuit. Born in the South Bronx, Joe himself became a permanent fixture in hip-hop in the early 1990s signing his first recording contract with Relativity records. As one of the only Latino rappers at the time, he quickly became the voice of his people and was equally embraced by the rest of the hip-hop community.

He's collaborated with everyone from the mogul Diddy to the most lyrical master of ceremonies like Big L, Nas, Raekwon the Chief, Grand Puba and the lord finesse, to rhyme godfathers like LL Cool J and KRS-One, and he's even done a song with the late great Notorious B.I.G. As his music and popularity transcend rap, he's also gotten calls to collaborate with artists of other genres like Reggaeton superstar Don Omar and pop prince Ricky Martin and princesses such as Jennifer Lopez and Paris Hilton.

The proud father of 3 has also knocked on Hollywood's door appearing in films such as *I Like it Like That, Empire, Prison Song, WhiteBoyz, and Thicker Than Water*. Showing no signs of slowing up, Joe has taken his game international with world tours and seems like he can go at least another 13 years on the mic.

"Keeping relationships has a lot to do with being humble," he began to tell, attributing his longevity. "Even when I did sell 1.8 million records, I was making songs with cats who wasn't selling anything. I always helped people. I've been loyal and I got a passion for the game. I'm here 13 years. Ain't nobody here 13 years later and still relevant the way I am. I work for it. I got the passion for the music, that's what others don't have. That's why people respect it, they see it. Somebody that sells like five million records, they'll tell you, 'yo Joe makes some hot music. I wish he sold more, but he's on top of his game.' It's hard to do this. You see the grind, so you respect the grind."

GHOSTFACE KILLAH

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Ghostface Killah	Street Kwon Do	"The Champ (Remix)" by Ghostface Killah	"Ante Up" by M.O.P.

Who's gonna take the weight? In these days and times—the last days—for a multitude of reasons, this is the question at hand. And, if ever there was any doubt, the answer is, of course, none other than Ghostface (the artist formerly known as Ghostface Killah, or GFK, to friends). Armed with his heat rock of an album, *Fish Scale*, which boasts production from MF DOOM, Pete Rock, J.Dilla, MadLib, and many others, the broad-shouldered Ghostface stands ready and willing to carry the Wu Tang's burden and return rap to it's proper course. "You know, [fools] try to come on that other shit," he says of hip-hop's growing ranks of imposters, "so I just had come back to raw drugs, sex, money, and murder shit real quick to show these young [fools] how it's s'posed to be done."

And who better to kick the truth to the youth, than Ghost, an artist more universally accepted than American Express. "I know that [fools] got love for me," he says. "Where ever I go, up north, down south, out west, [they] show me love, because they respect me as a true artist." In an industry of swagger jackers and copy cats Ghost has always stood for integrity and innovation and his unique wordplay and unparalleled taste in beats has been demonstrated on each of his four solo albums (*Ironman*, *Supreme Clientele*, *Bulletproof Wallets*, *The Pretty Toney LP*), as well as his contributions to the four Wu Tang Clan albums, and perhaps most notably Raekwon's lauded classic, Only Built For Cuban Linx. "It used to be all about originality and flipping new words," he says. "Now you got [artists] all using the same words, but I come from that Slick Rick era, that Biz Markie era when everybody had to sound different, so my sound ain't like anybody else."

Indeed, born and raised in Staten Island's infamous Stapleton project, Ghost, born Dennis Coles 34 years ago, has always been a pioneer, even within his own crew. Though it's said that when Wu Tang Clan formed like Voltron in 1992 that RZA was the head, undoubtedly Ghostface was the body. "When RZA decided to form the Wu Tang I was the one that knew everyone," he says, "So I was the link that brought everyone together and that's why I was an executive producer on *36 Chambers*." That album would go on to go 3 times platinum and change the face of rap music.

Though most rappers would be content with one earth-shattering release, Ghost followed-up *36 Chambers* with *Cuban Linx* a short two years later and introduced the rap game to crack game. "With the purple tape me and Rae brought all that silk shirt, Cristal, wallabee shit to the game," he says. "We showed everyone how to do that drug dealer, live rap, you know what I mean." Hailed an unquestionable classic, *Cuban Linx* set the tone of rap for nearly a decade, and established the duo of Rae and Ghost as hip-hop's most vivid, most visceral storytellers. The next year GFK made his solo debut with *Ironman*, and proved that, though he and Rae were an excellent team, he could excel alone as well.

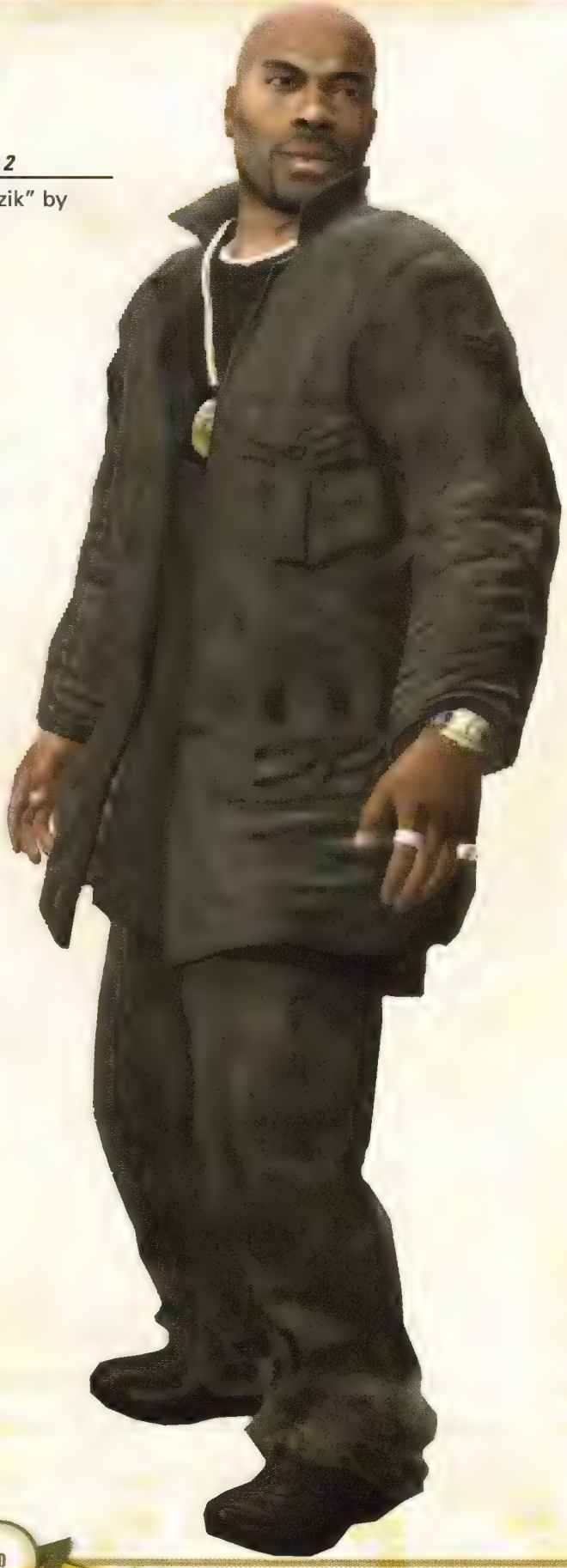
However, it was *Supreme Clientele*, Ghost's sophomore effort released in the wake of the Wu's receding relevance, which earned him his most accolades as a soloist and set him apart from his Clan brethren. Judged to be one to the top 10 albums of all time by VIBE magazine, Ghost's '99 effort also yielded him his most successful radio record, "Chercez La Ghost." Over the next five years Ghost would go on to drop two more critically acclaimed albums, as well as appearing prominently on the later Wu Tang Clan records.

While hip-hop stays an ever changing creative environment, over 10 years deep in the game Ghost remains one of the genre's few immovable, revered creators. " is just me showing that I can still ball with the best of them," he says. "With each album I learn so this album has the most knowledge of all of them." Songs like "Kilo" and "Be Easy" demonstrate this with their effortless brilliance. Free of intoxicants ("I haven't smoked in over two years," says the one time psychedelic fanatic.), Ghost's flow is focused and free. "This album is gonna put me back on top of everyone's list," he says. "Ain't nobody approaching they music with the care that I do—down to the sequencing."

As it always has, it's this attention to detail which will set Ghostface apart as he puts rap on his back and, true to his superhero moniker, saves the day.

GREER

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Greer	Ghetto Blaster	"Hate Me Now" by Nas	"Crunk Muzik" by Jim Jones

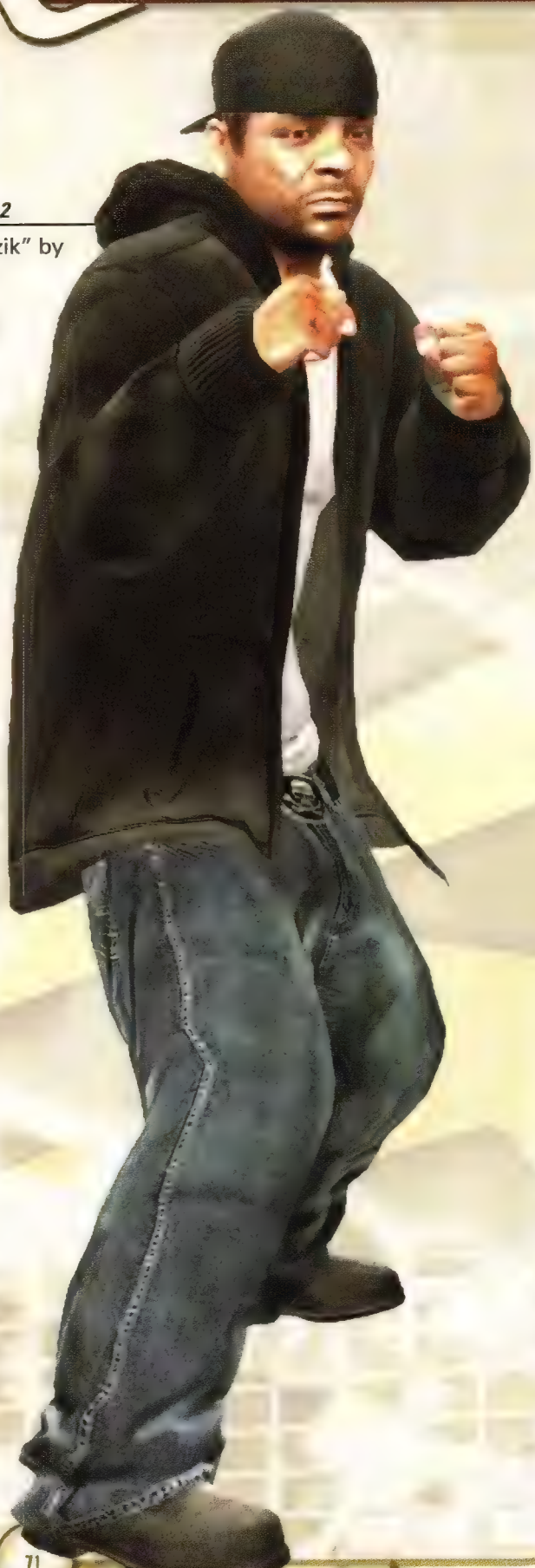


Like Boyd, Greer is one of Wheatly's crooked cops. Greer, however, is closer to Wheatly and is considered the lieutenant's right-hand man. He didn't get to that position by being a weak-ass busta', either. He made it by always leaving an impression on the competition.

He is one of the game's strongest Ghetto Blasters, bringing all the fury of the ghetto to every fight. How so? He's a dirty cop! He doesn't care about holding back or fighting honorably. He'll do whatever it takes to come out on top; that includes using every hazard, kicking you while you're down, and any other trick in the book—so fight using every trick in your book, too.

JIM JONES

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Jim Jones	Ghetto Blaster	"We Fly High" by Jim Jones	"Crunk Muzik" by Jim Jones



Self-determined, self-reliant, self-actualized and entrepreneurial, Jim Jones is quickly proving to the world that he will be a force in hip-hop for years to come. With fortitude, ambition and "drug dealer–earned gangsta" street smarts, over the past decade Jones has risen to international hip-hop royalty.

Born Joseph Guillermo Jones in Harlem in 1976 to an African American mother and a Puerto Rican father, renaissance man Jones is an indisputable hip-hop force from the streets, to the music video set, to the mic, all the way to the boardroom.

As C.E.O. of Diplomat Records, the label he co-founded with childhood friend, famed rapper Cam'ron, Jones created a world renowned hip-hop movement. As the catalytic tour-de-force behind the Diplomats and the Dipset Crew, Jones was the brain man who got things and people to move, catapulting the group to its respectful place on the hip-hop landscape.

The Dipset Crew creates a buzz that quenches the thirst of hungry hood riders worldwide who abide by the "No Snitching" signs. On the streets from Harlem to Compton, down to the Dirty South to across the Atlantic to London, the names, Cam'ron, Juelz Santana and the Diplomats have become synonymous with Damon Dash, Jay-Z, and Roc-A-Fella Records.

Not only a skilled rap manager but also an award-winning music video gangsta' auteur, it was Jones who helmed such MTV and BET video favorites as his own "Certified Gangsta" and "Crunk Muzik", Cam'ron's "Oh Boy", "Hey Ma" and "Get Em Girl/Killa Cam", State Property's "When You Hear That" and several videos for Juelz Santana.

Following his debut performance on Diplomatic Immunity, which was quickly certified Gold, Jones was ready to show the world his individual skills on center stage. Jones released his debut solo album, *On My Way To Church* in August of 2004, amplifying the Diplomat movement at lightening speed. With rugged collaborations and hardcore life confessions, the album debuted at #18 on the Billboard Top 200 in August 2004. It sold over 200,000 copies, spawning two awesome singles in the shape of "Certified Gangsta" (feat. The Game and Cam'ron) and "Crunk Muzik" (feat. Juelz Santana, Cam'ron). Both video clips logged extensive time on MTV2 and B.E.T. Next up in 2004 came Diplomatic Immunity 2, another Diplomat Records/KOCH Records thumping release. Blending jungle beats with hustling hooks, radical song titles like "Wouldn't You Like To Be A Gangsta Too?" snatched the curiosity of traditional hip-hop and pop-rap fans, focusing their interest on the Dipset Crew and what it truly means to be a gangsta rapper.

Jones's solo career continued to ignite listeners hungry for his raw and authentic sound. In August of 2005, his sophomore album release, *Harlem: Diary of a Summer* dropped on the scene. The album debuted at #5 on the Billboard 200 chart, an affirmation of Jones' prowess as a solo artist and an unquestionable power in hip-hop. This album saw the release of three more hit singles for Jones, "Baby Girl," "Summer Wit Miami" (featuring Trey Songz), and "What You Been Drankin On" (featuring P. Diddy, Paul Wall, Jha' Jha), which burned up the airwaves through '05 and '06, priming this rising superstar for his highly anticipated third album, *Hustler's P.O.M.E.*, out November 7, 2006. The single, "We Fly High" made major waves in New York Radio, and the video has been chosen as MTV Jamz' "Jam of The Week," was featured on MTV2's Makes the Video, and is still receiving spins on BET and MTV stations. With all of this hot new single's success the new album is virtually guaranteed to be Jimmy's biggest release to date.

Jim also featured on the Dipset *More Than Music, Vol. 1* mixtape which debuted at #22 on the Billboard Top 200 in July of 2005. But like his primary influences, P. Diddy and Damon Dash, Jones has broadened his appeal beyond the airwaves. His sizzling liquor, Sizzurp, has captured global attention in the liquor industry, and is juicing up VIP party scenes from coast to coast. A new clothing line in the works is certain to ignite the runways. In addition, Jones' multifaceted musical skills led Warner Music Group to tap him for the position of Director of A&R in January 2005. He is the album Executive Producer for the new Atlantic artist Hot Wright, and is also in the process of negotiating another label deal through Asylum Records. Jones is unquestionably a mogul in the making looking, to capitalize on the glamorous gangsta lifestyle and beyond.

Building upon his undisputed success and recognizing his influence on youth around the globe, Jones released in his documentary DVD film titled *The Jim Jones Project* in '06, which presents a candidly told cautionary tale of a gangsta rapper in transition. It is a purposeful message intended to act as a deterrent for self-destructive behaviors of at-risk youth who have taken the bravado of gangsta rap to heart. Making his views about the gangsta entertainment world clear to young people can perhaps best be summed up when he says, "My advice for younger people is: Please don't try this shit at home."

In seeking to further educate young people who look up to him as a community leader who truly understands the challenges young people face day-to-day in the inner city, Jones has dedicated himself to educating youth about politics and empowering them to use their influence to reach their highest potential. He is a committed community activist and youth advocacy leader having recently sponsored a basketball tournament for the housing development where he grew up in an effort to help keep youth off the street. Additionally, through his active participation in the Andre Neal Foundation, the Southeast Queens Action Network for Public Schools, and the Russell Simmons hip-hop Summit, Jones stays focused on building stronger communities through youth. Faithfully, he visits high schools to speak to juniors and seniors about life and the music business and "how staying focused with a plan is the only way to truly be successful."

Jim Jones is clearly a man on a mission.

JOHNNY NUNEZ

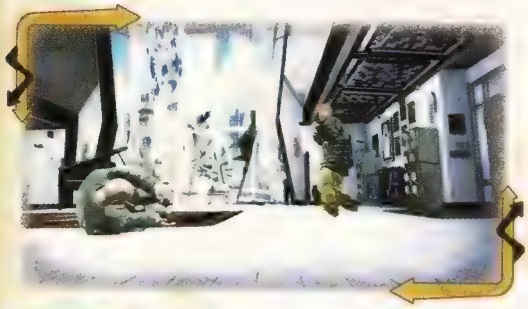
Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Johnny Nunez	Ghetto Blaster	"Make It Rain" by Fat Joe	"Ante Up" by M.O.P.

Johnny Nunez is a photographer with the worst sense of personal privacy. He will pursue what he thinks is a great shot as far as he can, even if that means stirring the pot to a boil. He's got particular interest in the hip-hop pantheon, and proves to be a thorn in your side throughout Build a Label Mode.

As far as his skills on the battleground, Nunez is a tough Ghetto Blaster fighter. He often favors using the hazards rather than getting his clothes dirty. But rest assured, even though he's dressed to the nines, he can get down and dirty. As long there's a good photo op, he'll roll up his sleeves.

KANO

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Kano	Jah Breaka	"Ante Up" by M.O.P.	"Crunk Muzik" by Jim Jones



Meet 19-year-old Kane 'Kano' Robinson: garage's lyricist laureate, the MC's MC, the street poet who knows it, a pirate frequency all of his own amid the scramble of the national garage airspace. A key member in East London's reigning N.A.S.T.Y. Crew, he has talent, credibility and vision coming out of his pores...

At 16, when he was still looking up to D Double E, the one-man garage industry who heads up eastside contenders N.A.S.T.Y. Crew, he delivered 'Boys Love Girls' - a treatise on the politics of the sexual playground expressed in the language the playground best understands. As Dizzee's 'I Luv U' and Wiley's chilly 'Igloo' and 'Ice Rink' single were standardising UK garage's next genetic strain, the wavering melody lines and panic-button riddim of 'Boys Love Girls' gained a steady footing on the underground.

At Mike Skinner's personal request Kano has been busy working with The Mitchell Brothers, a pair of East London MCs championed and produced by The Streets. Along with D Double E and Lethal B, Kano recently detonated an evening of East London style over in Berlin. 'No one knew us over there but we got them hyped 'cause we were enjoying it ourselves. That's the key - to enjoy it yourself. If I was at a rave and saw people on stage not really having a good time, not giving it their all, I wouldn't I give it my all.'

Kano's game plan is clear - he's enjoying himself, and it's a safe bet a spin of 'Ps & Qs' or new 'Typical Me' will mean you will too. It may be a long way off, but if The Streets-style fame comes knocking on his door, Kano's tactics would be true to his rectitude.

'Fame would piss me off, I reckon,' he concludes. 'I bet Mike wishes he could sell as many records but not be so famous. Your face is just blatant and everyone knows who you are. It must be a nightmare... I'd probably stay indoors a lot. Some people get into this for the fame. I don't. I just want to do it for the music.'

LIL JON

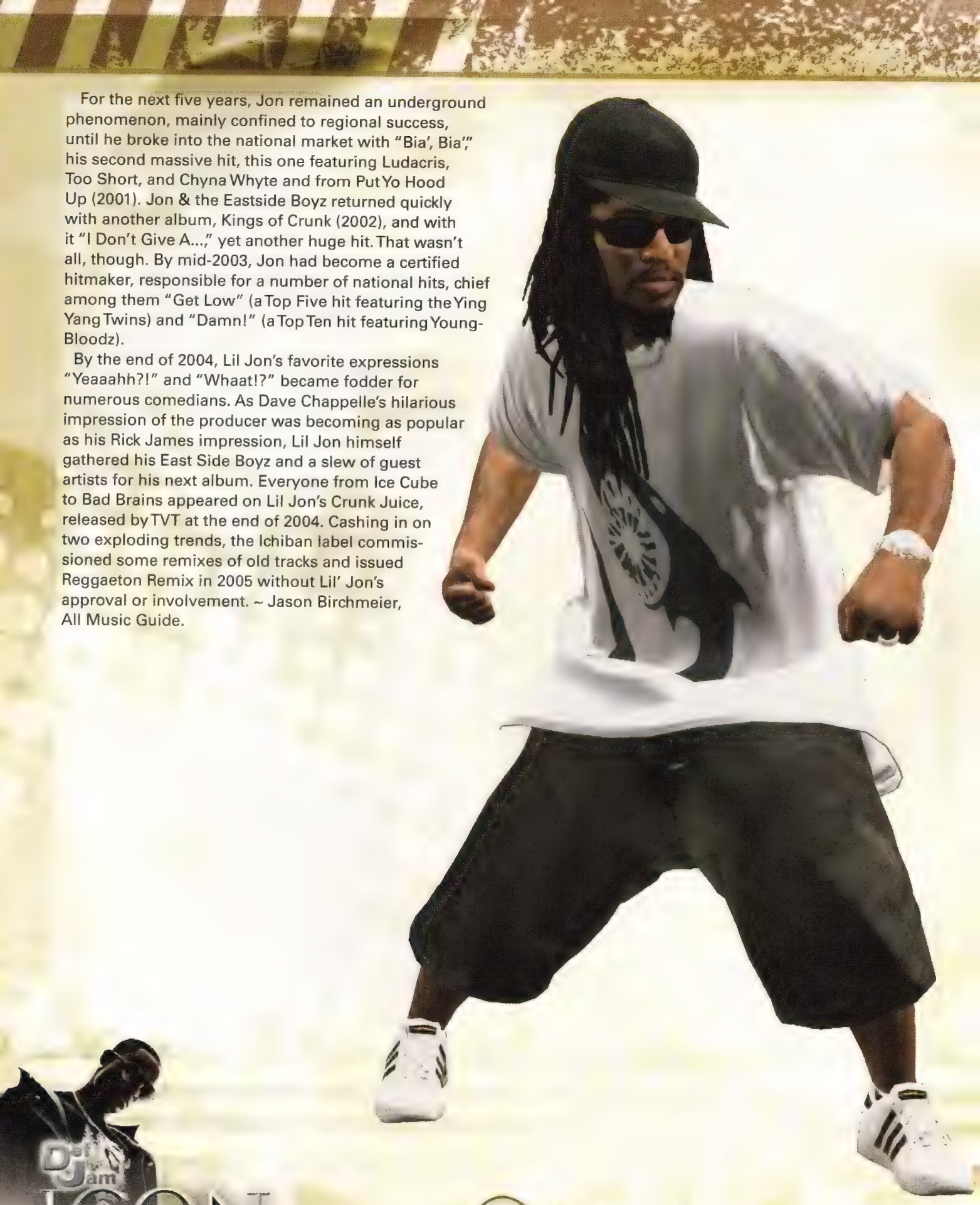
Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Lil Jon	Muay Fly	"Get Low" by Lil Jon	"Get Crunk" by Lil Jon

Atlanta and the surrounding area had always been a hotbed for party rap and bass music throughout the '90s, and more than anyone else, Lil Jon & the Eastside Boyz took these styles to the masses with a cutting-edge Dirty South attitude perfect for the burgeoning club scene of the time. The Atlanta-based rapper/producer began as a club DJ before Jermaine Dupri invited him in 1993 to come work for So So Def Records, where Jon served as the executive vice president of A&R.

In the meantime, Jon hosted a radio show at V103 and began producing and remixing tracks for such major Atlanta-area artists as Too Short, Xscape, Total, and Usher. After making a name for himself, Jon then debuted his Eastside Boyz (Big Sam and Lil Bo) on Get Crunk, Who U Wit: Da Album (1996) and scored a club anthem, "Who You Wit?"

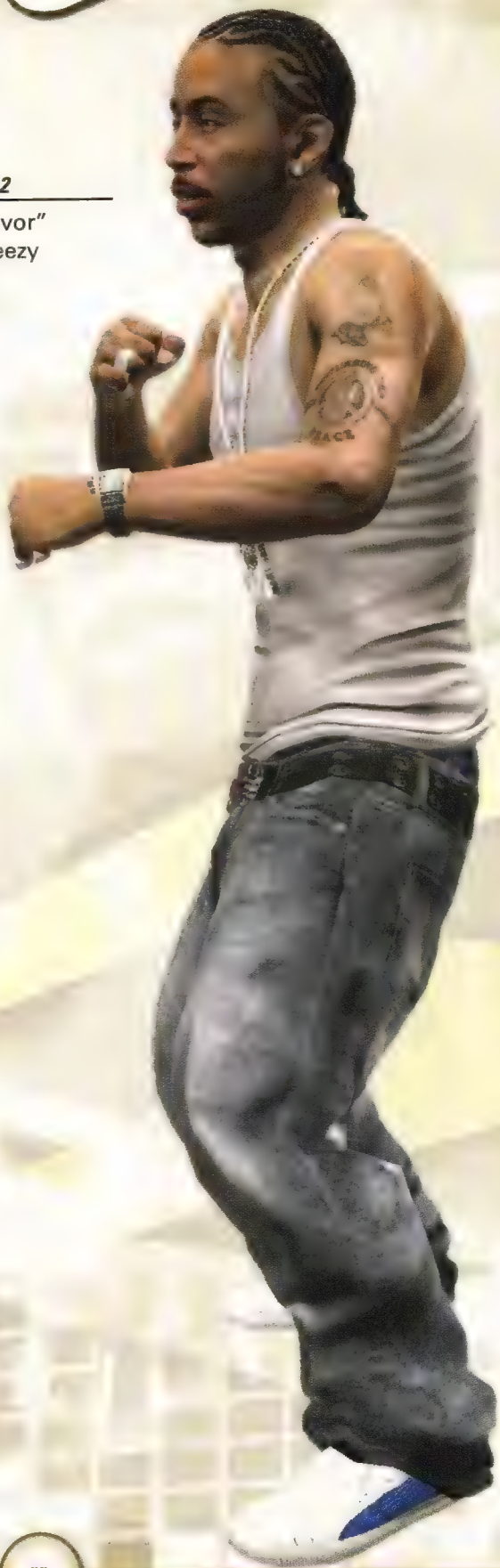
For the next five years, Jon remained an underground phenomenon, mainly confined to regional success, until he broke into the national market with "Bia', Bia'," his second massive hit, this one featuring Ludacris, Too Short, and Chyna Whyte and from Put Yo Hood Up (2001). Jon & the Eastside Boyz returned quickly with another album, Kings of Crunk (2002), and with it "I Don't Give A...," yet another huge hit. That wasn't all, though. By mid-2003, Jon had become a certified hitmaker, responsible for a number of national hits, chief among them "Get Low" (a Top Five hit featuring the Ying Yang Twins) and "Damn!" (a Top Ten hit featuring Young-Bloodz).

By the end of 2004, Lil Jon's favorite expressions "Yeaaahh?!" and "Whaat!?" became fodder for numerous comedians. As Dave Chappelle's hilarious impression of the producer was becoming as popular as his Rick James impression, Lil Jon himself gathered his East Side Boyz and a slew of guest artists for his next album. Everyone from Ice Cube to Bad Brains appeared on Lil Jon's Crunk Juice, released by TVT at the end of 2004. Cashing in on two exploding trends, the Ichiban label commissioned some remixes of old tracks and issued Reggaeton Remix in 2005 without Lil' Jon's approval or involvement. ~ Jason Birchmeier, All Music Guide.



LUDACRIS

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Ludacris	Muay Fly	"Get Back" by Ludacris	"Soul Survivor" by Young Jeezy



While it has only been two years since the release of The Red Light District, acclaimed rapper Ludacris (Chris Bridges) has gone through more than a few personal changes. From dealing with "haters" spitting in his direction to his role in the Oscar winning film Crash to his blown out of proportion "disagreement" with Oprah to being a father to his daughter, 28-year-old Luda continues to mature as a man and an artist on his fifth disc Release Therapy."

Chris "Ludacris" Bridges put his experiences of being not just an artist in Release Therapy, but also reveals some of what he has learned as CEO of Disturbing Tha Peace Records. Under his watch are a collection of talented and diverse artists, which include; Shawnna (the dynamic Chicago bred female rap star), Bobby Valentino (the smooth R&B platinum selling singer), Field Mob (the groundbreaking hip hop duo) and the newest addition to the DTP family and Shareefa (the dynamic R&B rising superstar).

"I'm not going to lie, but I've made my share of mistakes," confesses Ludacris. "I know about success, but I also know about tribulations. It's the balance of the two that is the foundation of my project. In the beginning I was thinking of putting out a double record, with one being Release and the other Therapy, but it's more real to have that dualism on one disc."

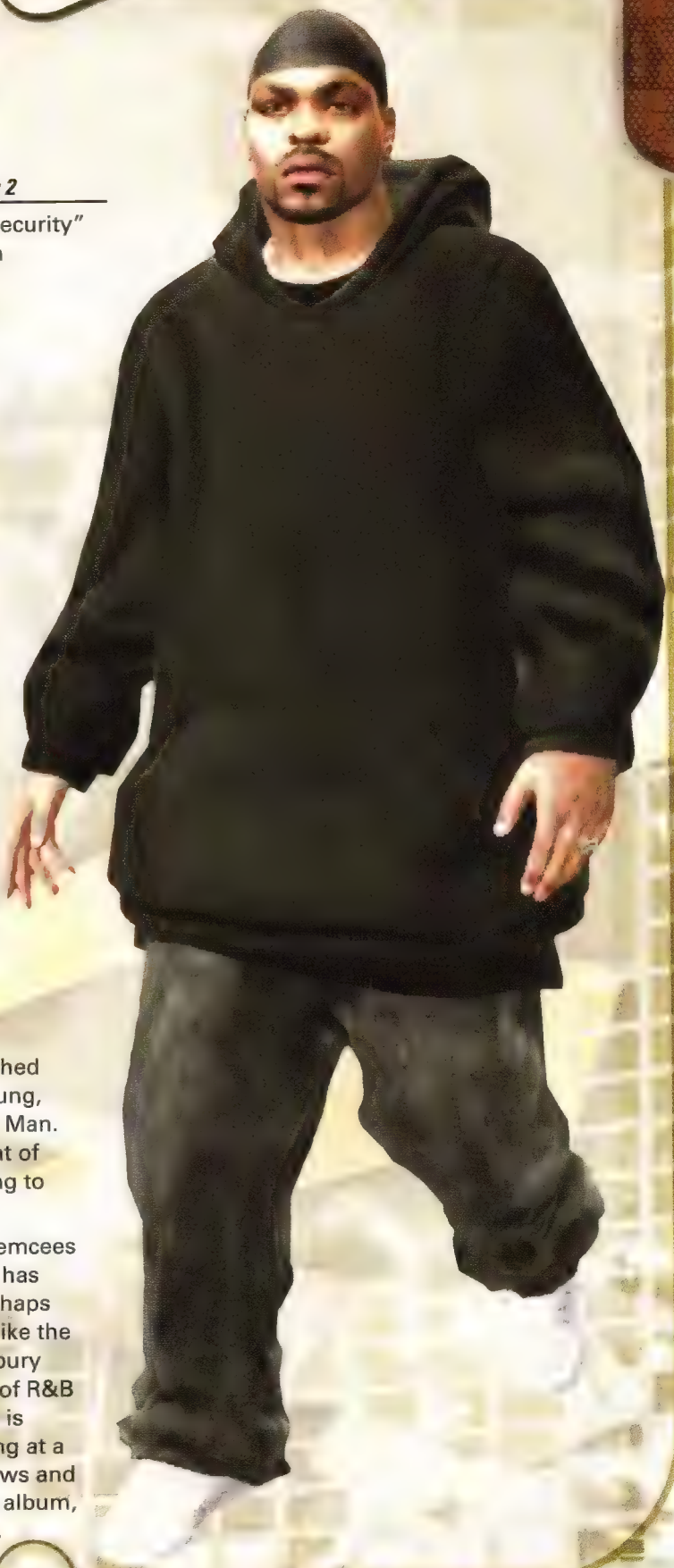
One listen to Luda's Release Therapy and the growth is obvious. "Maturity is a beautiful thing," Ludacris says. "Going into the studio to make Release Therapy, I felt like a wiser, more intelligent person. That was part of the vibe I wanted to bring across on the record, a more personal side that many have not seen. I know this is my fifth album, but I feel as though this is the first time I've ever exposed this much of myself. Like the film Crash, people can either love me or hate me, but they'll always respect me."

While there isn't any doubt of Luda's seriousness on Release Therapy, he also comes on strong with his trademarked humor. "To me, part of being a complex person is a balance of many things," says Luda. "On this record I talk about striving, silliness, sadness, sex, salvation, amongst other things. I'm not knocking anybody's hustle, but many rappers only talk about one side of their lives. Personally, I'm trying to be more three-dimensional storyteller, and I hope that comes through on the record."

Already leaked to the internet, "War With God" is a heavy hitter. Over a vintage Billy Paul sample, Luda refuses to be the rope-a-dope. "I'm the best and there's nothin' that you can do about it," he raps with authority. "Never needed a publicity stunt, let's tell the truth about it /even in the core of the streets you can't sway the youth about it/ but keep runnin' yo mouth, and I swear I'ma knock a tooth up out it."

METHOD MAN

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Method Man	Ghetto Blaster	"Da Rockwilder" by Method Man and Redman	"F**k Da Security" by Redman



In the dark, womb-like sanctuary of Jimi Hendrix's Electric Lady studios in downtown Manhattan—a place that has birthed historical musical moments—sits the artist known as Iron Lung, Tical, Wu Brother #1, Johnny Blaze, and of course...Method Man. With a trusty, half-lit blunt by his side, he is lounging in front of white grand piano, his hands sweeping the keyboards, trying to remember a tune he memorized years ago.

Maybe the idea of one of hip hop's finest—and grimiest—emcees tickling the ivories sounds odd, or out of place, but Mr. Mef has never been the type to fit in. His husky, guttural voice is perhaps the most distinct in the game, his flow—dark and complex like the graphic novels from which he took his moniker from—can bury itself in cinematic tracks from RZA, complement the voices of R&B divas and or attack party tracks from Rocwilder. Whether he is trading verses with partner in rhyme, Redman, crowd surfing at a Wu Tang show, or stealing a scene in various television shows and films, Method Man is a true individual spirit. With his latest album, 4:21, The Day After, he is also focused on being a true artist.

Unlike some previous efforts—where Meth admits his priorities were different—on this new album, he says he's focusing on lyrics. After his last album, Tical O: The Prequel, he went through an especially rough time in his life—both personally and professionally—which provided him with a bulk of material. "I had a lot on my mind at the time and the second thing was, I decided to really talk about something and I had a lot to draw from and when the pen hit the paper it was like damn, remember this? And by the time I was done it was like shit, let's go." The result is his most personal and introspective work yet.

Doing the work behind the boards on 4:21, are Wu Tang mastermind and long-time collaborator, RZA as well as Scott Storch, Havoc, K1 and Eric Sermon. "With Eric, we did three songs in three days," Meth says with an amazed smile, "He just comes in with ideas of top. And with RZA, shit, I've watched him build tracks from scratch, so all I really have to do is put the pen to the paper." Eric Sermon provided the beat for Meth's first single, "Say", featuring Lauryn Hill. The track finds Meth addressing critics, fickle fans and haters for disrespecting him and his Wu Tang brethren.

"I've been venting about all this for years and [my manager] was like, 'Write about it, Eric has the perfect joint.' And, Lauryn Hill herself, she just had the raw emotion, the small things she said on the song was enough for me to push my pen and let myself be vulnerable." Meth says his ability to let himself be so open is in line with the entire concept of the album, and its title. "The national weed smoking day is 4/20, so I named my album 4/21 the day after. Because after that day, you have this moment of clarity when you're not high and you see things clearly." The Grammy-winner sighs and continues, a serious, determined look on his face. "You feel like you're not in on the joke, and everyone's laughing at you. I felt like no one was taking me seriously. I got real angry and I just starting writing."

Anger proved to be a great motivator, as the Ticalion Stallion wrapped up the album in a few short months. He says the creative process has been cathartic, and though his skin hasn't gotten any thicker, he's able to use his writing talent to inspire self-confidence.

"It's real talk, I'm going to keep my spirits up and not let it get things to me. You know, if you start reading your own press and feeding into it, and you start questioning yourself, like, 'am I wack?' and you have to be like, 'No!' I learned to pat myself on the back, and that it's ok to pat myself on the back sometimes."

We definitely agree.

MIKE JONES

Brawler	*Fighting Style*	*Default Song 1*	*Default Song 2*
Mike Jones	Beatboxer	"Back Then" by Mike Jones	"Got it Sewed Up (Remix)" by Mike Jones

There's a common misconception that as an artist, you are inferior without the backing of a major label. You aren't supposed to be able to garner enough attention to gain shouts from Jay-Z or DJ Clue during an episode of MTV's Direct Effect. Nor are you supposed to have a deal with Reebok, duets with stars like Usher and Mya, a clothing line, or be able to move 250,000 units of your product.

But one man has done this and more: Meet the accomplished Mike Jones.

Born and raised in Houston, Jones has always had an eye on the future while laying the foundation to climb the ladder of success. Jones 's first love has always been basketball, but when his hoop dream did not materialize, he realized that he had to make money to become his own man. As most hoods Biggie described, either you're slinging crack rock or got a wicked jump shot. But Jones began to hustle by squandering his money to create Ice Age Entertainment in 2001 to pursue his other love: rapping.

After creating his own label and studio to keep costs down, Jones ran into a problem whenever he needed music from a producer. "Back in the day," he reminisces, "I'd ask for a beat and they'd be like, 'Who are you?' I'd say, 'Mike Jones.' And then they'd be like, 'Who?' 'Mike Jones!'" A good businessman recognized a possible branding technique and his famous "Mike Jones, who? Mike Jones!" hook was born.

"I do it to throw it in their face. They helped more than they know," Mike states, happily.

Next, Jones began to circulate his music, hitting DJs and strip clubs to make sure his music was heard in the streets. He garnered such a buzz that the talented, chopped-and-screwed master Michael Watts, owner of Swisha house, took notice. In 2002, Jones became an official resident in the house and signed to the label. The partnership has been blazing lanes ever since under the Mike Jones motto: "You don't work you don't eat, you don't grind you don't shine."

With the work he's put in, his future is brighter than Lil' Flip's smile in the sunshine. He has dropped four albums on Swisha house: Ballin Underground, First Round Draft Picks, Runnin' The Game, and Day Hell Broke Loose 2. The latter contains a high-quality video of his single, "Still Tippin'." Meanwhile, the combination of freestyle verses with popular beats mixed in with original works like "Who is Mike Jones?" and "Got It Sowed" can be found on two discs per album (one at normal speed and the other chopped and screwed). They've already netted Jones over 250,000-units sold independently! Keep in mind that these are sales due to word of mouth, not through video and radio promotions. With all of his success, why is Jones waiting to sign with a major label? There is a certain amount he feels he deserves. "Major [labels] will respect your hustle and will give you more when they see you grinding," he says. "Choosers pay. If you choose, you have to pay. It's different if you approach them rather than be approached because they know that you have value and will make their money back."

But, until that day, Jones says, "I'm trying to be the first indie artist on the cover of The Source. I want to be on 106 & Park as an indie. If I keep grinding and building a buzz, I know good things will happen. I don't need to be on a major to get all of that. I want to show that you can do this as an indie."

Whenever Jones gets tired and feels too weak to move, he looks at the tattoo engraved on his arm for inspiration. It reads: "If you don't work you don't eat, you don't grind you don't shine. Anything my routine, 90% grind, 10% sleep. I grind so much I hardly get sleep. I'm not comfortable sleeping, but I dream, Mike Jones." According to Jones, "If I'm at home sleeping, I'm doing nothing but dreaming. That's what got me here. If I'm awake, grinding, and putting effort into it, I'mma be alright. I'mma keep hustling and producing good music. I give the streets what they want to hear."

Remember the name Mike Jones, because he will not let you forget it.

PAUL WALL

Brawler	*Fighting Style*	*Default Song 1*	*Default Song 2*
Paul Wall	Muay Fly	"Sittin' Sideways" by Paul Wall	"Trill" by Paul Wall

Champions are usually crowned based on the number of times they emerge victorious in competition. Being the people's champ, however, requires something entirely different, but equally tough - possessing the kind of personality that wins the hearts and minds of the public. With the release of his highly anticipated major label debut LP, THE PEOPLE'S CHAMP, rapper Paul Wall affirms his status as one of the most appealing and charismatic young voices to emerge from hip hop's Southern hemisphere.

"My music is about hustling, not just hustling in terms of the block," explains the 24-year-old Houston, Texan. "It's music that inspires you to go out there and get it - doing whatever you gotta do. As far as being the people's champ, I've always treated people with respect whether you work in the mailroom or you're the president of the company. And the people in general have really just embraced me for that. "

Thanks largely to his dynamic third verse behind fellow H-Town pro's Slim Thug and Mike Jones on 2005's hottest single, "Still Tippin'," Paul's nimble flow, clever wordplay, and molasses thick Texas drawl have been embraced by hordes of new fans in recent months. Yet truth be known Paul Wall's been laying he groundwork for his breakthrough moment for a full decade.

Like many folks of his generation, Paul dreamt of one day rapping professionally back from his days as a teenager growing up on Houston's Northwest Side. "But just recognizing that it was an uphill battle I thought of trying to work my way into the industry in various other ways," he recalls. Shrewdly, at age 14 he began doing street team promotions in Houston for record labels like Def Jam, Cash Money, and No Limit, while honing his rhyming skills on the side. Eventually by 1997 his circle of street team clients came to include Michael 5000 Watts, impresario of local mixtape juggernaut Swisha House.

"Michael knew I rapped," says Paul. "But I finally got down with him on the music side in 1999 when I did an intro for his radio show. And he showed me a lot of love from that, and put me on the tapes. And I got a huge response. Honestly, the response was so big that people just started asking, what's up with that dude? So he started letting me get on more and more mixtapes."

Inspired by the "Screwed and Chopped" musical innovations of Houston's own legendary DJ Screw (who pioneered the art of slowing and pitching down records and chopping and repeating lines of lyrics to mesmerizing effect), Paul further ingratiated himself to the regional music scene by developing into an accomplished DJ in his own right. With these dual talents in his arsenal he launched an underground recording career that saw his first four independently released albums for the Paid In Full label-Get Your Mind Correct, The Chick Magnet, Controversy Sells, and How To Be a Player-each chart for at least 15 consecutive weeks on the Billboard Rap Chart. Now reunited with Swisha House (in a joint venture with Asylum Records) for The People's Champ, Paul still marvels at his initial success: "The style of music that we were creating in Houston and Texas was just so different that I never thought that the rest of the world would embrace it the way that they have now. A lot of my music is based on the Texas culture and Skrew culture."

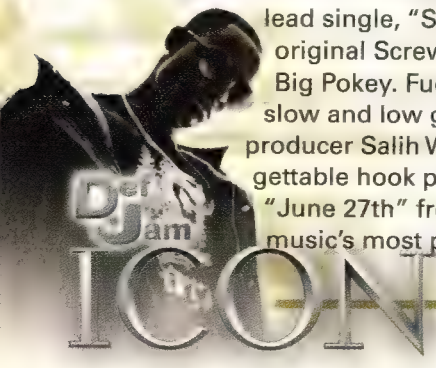
No better example of Paul's allegiance to his roots can be heard than on The People's Champ's bangin' lead single, "Sittin' Sideways," featuring original Screwed Up Clique member Big Pokey. Fueled by another infectious slow and low groove from "Still Tippin" producer Salih Williams, and an unforgettable hook pulled from Pokey's 1997 "June 27th" freestyle- one of Skrew music's most popular vocal performances ever-the song effortlessly pays homage to the Screw legacy while it simultaneously showcases Paul's playful boasts and flair for conveying H-town's local flavor: "A legend in the hood for gold grills and poppin' seals/ A icon on the mic for showcasing my verbal skills/ I'm in the club posted up with some gangbangers/ Still flippin' the old school kitty Cadillac on swingers/ I got a styrofoam white cup fulladat drink/ Lookin' for that dank/ My hustle game sharp as a shank."

"Comin' up as a rapper from the South my inspirations and pioneers were artists like UGK, Lil' Keke, Fat Pat, Screwed Up Clique, and Street Military," says Paul. "People that were in Houston just doing it on a local scene, and that I saw represented our culture and the day to day life I saw in Houston. They represented the way we talked, the way we act, the type of drugs we used, the crease in the jeans, the kind of car we drive, the way we fix our cars up. All the things they were talking about when they were rapping were things that I was living."

Elsewhere, The People's Champ's knockout blows arrive from both expected and unexpected angles. While Paul defines his hustling credo over the menacing piano chords of "Trill"—"Trill is when you hustle/Trill is when you grind/Trill is when you punch in that clock overtime/ Trill is when you keep it real 100 percent/ Hold it down for your team, run your game full sprint"—"Stand Up" ingeniously pairs his down south steez with energetic exhortations from Philly's own Freeway, producing a suprisingly winning combination. Paul also reveals his sensitive side on the moving "Oh Girl," a lament of a love gone awry based on the classic 70s soul cut by the Chi-Lites of the same name. But the LP's true emotional centerpiece is "Just Paul Wall," a song on which Paul discusses the trials, tribulations, and ultimate triumphs of his life with remarkable honesty and detail: "I was abandoned at an early age/ My daddy was a dope fiend-I ain't seen him since the second grade/ I sing the same song-deadbeat dad, single mom/ I was always in the crowd/Yet still I was all alone... Pain took me from a boy to a man/ I knew I'd make it to the end if I stuck to the plan."

"It was terrible," Paul admits of some of those rough early years. "But I've never been the type to make excuses. I just try to find a solution. I just deal with it and move on."

Such fortitude and perseverance hasn't only informed Paul's life and music, but helped spur other aspects of his career as well. Creating nearly as much of a buzz as his music amongst his rapping peers is Paul's skill at designing custom made gold fronts and grills. What began as a side promotional hustle of Paul passing out flyers for a local jeweler at age 17 has now evolved into TV Jewelry, a company that proudly counts rap



superstars T.I., Nelly, Slick Rick, Mike Jones, Lil Wayne, Kanye West, Chingy, Master P, Lil' Jon, and many others amongst its growing clientele. Thus when Paul rhymes on "Sittin' Sideways," — "You see me actin' bad I'm showin' out and pullin' stunts/ Say cheese and show my fronts/There's more karats than Bugs Bunny's lunch," he's literally putting his money where his mouth is.

In fact, it's difficult to imagine a more appropriate secondary business for this most enterprising, dedicated, and endearingof artists. Paul's future stands to shine as brightly as the rocks that festoon his wide smile. Yet his focus forever remains being just Paul Wall.

"It's just now starting to get on a national level," reflects Paul, "but I don't get caught up in all the bullshit in being a celebrity. Even locally I never got caught up in a my-shit-don't-stink-type attitude. And because of that there's people that weren't even fans of my music, but when they meet me and see the type of person I am, they go back and listen to the music and are like, you know what, man, that shit is jammin'!"

Spoken like a true people's champion.

REDMAN

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Redman	Black Panther	"Let's Go" by Redman	"F**k Da Security" by Redman

The doctor is in. The funk doc, that is. But this time he's got a serious case of Malpractice against him. As Newark, New Jersey's #1 candidate, Redman has put it down for almost ten straight years, delivering a smash each time out. His four solo albums (Whut? Thee Album, Dare Iz a Darkside, Muddy Waters, Doc's Da Name 2000) and two collaboration joints (Blackout! w/Method Man, and El Nino w/Def Squad) have placed the rapper in a hip-hop hall of fame, because only a few artists have managed to be that consistent. And Redman is one of them.

Though he upholds his reputation in hip-hop by remaining true to his formula of funk-driven beats and unconventional rhymes, Redman intends to stretch his own boundaries with his fifth solo album, Malpractice. He explains, "When a doctor operates and does something he's not supposed to do, they call it malpractice. That's what this album is, I'm going to be breaking all the rules, stepping it up and doing things that I wouldn't normally do."

Redman busts through the door with "Let's Get Dirty" featuring DJ Kool, and seals the coffin to the flossy, iced-out MC. The song's grimy out-the-trunk feel will bring the "under" back above ground. His alter ego, Reggie Noble, is confident that Malpractice will be another classic. With production by Rockwilder (the high-adrenaline "Let's Get Dirty"), Erick Sermon (the funk-rockin "Diggy Doc" and "High Wit Doc"), DJ Twinz (the smoothed out "Muh-F**ka"), and himself, Red keeps the funk coming. And he has gathered together a strong team to appear as guest artists. "I'm going to have more people on this album than usual. Part of the reason is because I got a much bigger click now. Of course, there's Def Squad, my immediate family, but there's also Method Man, and a bunch of new artists, like Icarus, D-Don and Saukrates, that I'm about to put out on my own label," he adds.

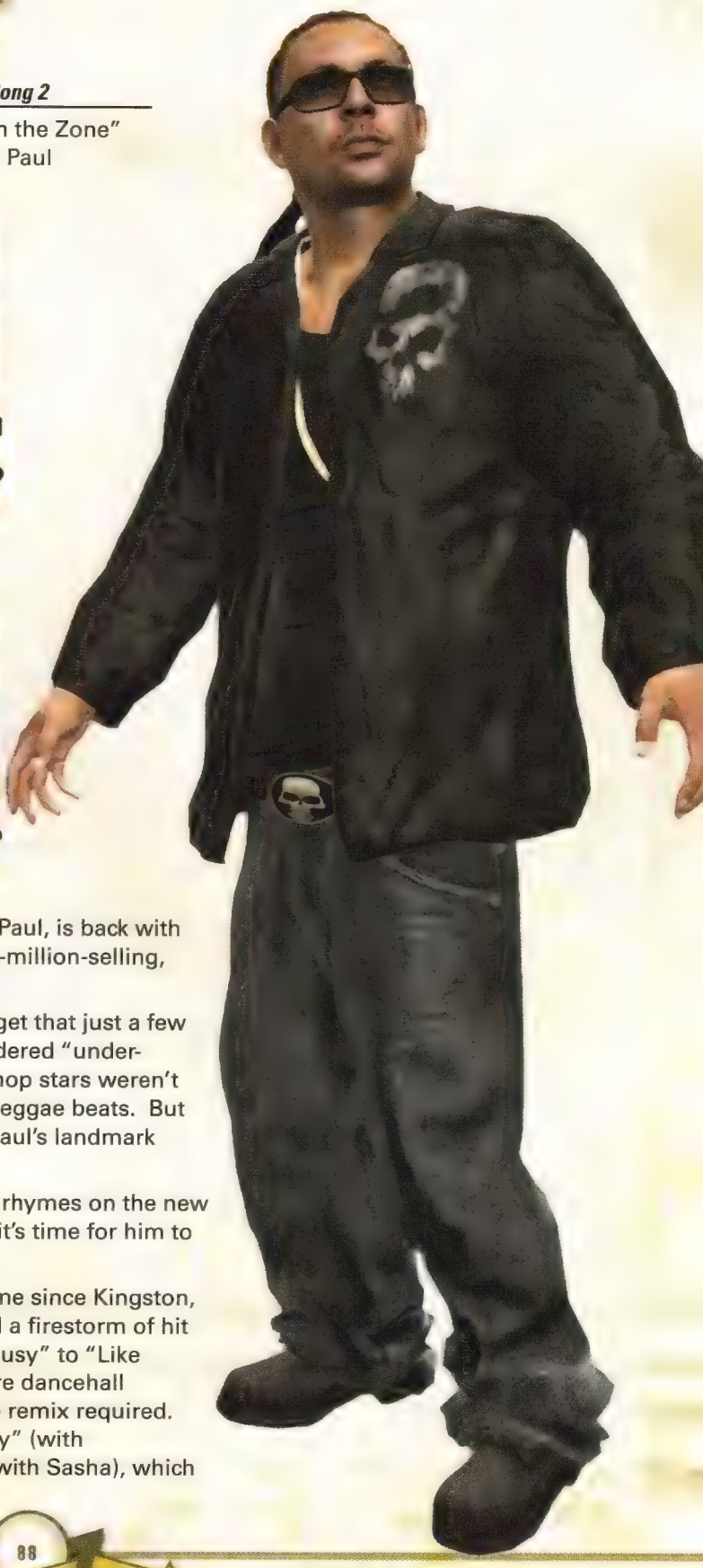
Redman's time in hip-hop has been well spent. Rather than waste time planning, the outrageous emcee just delivers. "I don't like to wait two or three years to drop an album. I try to drop one every year, at the end of the year, to close it out with a bang," he says laughing. As a result, the music always surprises listeners, never sounding like anything else out there. "I feel as though I always serve the fans, so I'm not trying to jump the gun too much. Malpractice will definitely be something different than what you've come to expect from Redman, but I ain't trying to go way out there either." Songs, especially the album's highlight "Smash Sumthin," provide that genuine Redman sound, complete with hardcore rhymes over truck-bumpin beats. While some rappers just make songs, Redman's history proves that he is an all-around multi-talented hip-hop artist.

In addition to his musical achievements, Redman was nominated for a Grammy Award with De La Soul for his performance on the song "Oooh," and he received the 2000 Source Award with Method Man for Live Performer Of The Year. He will also appear alongside Meth in his major motion picture debut How High, which will be released early next year.

With these achievements and the platinum success of his last two projects, Redman is destined for much success with Malpractice. So if you're tired of the same ole' repetitiously boring hip-hop, then you'll need a prescription for this brand of funk. So whatever you do, don't forget to go see the doctor.

SEAN PAUL

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Sean Paul	Jah Breaka	"All Out" by Sean Paul	"Head in the Zone" by Sean Paul



The worldwide ambassador of dancehall reggae, Sean Paul, is back with "THE TRINITY," the highly anticipated follow-up to his six-million-selling, Grammy-winning breakthrough album, "DUTTY ROCK."

Looking back from this moment in 2005, it's easy to forget that just a few years ago, raw uncut Jamaican dancehall was still considered "underground" music. It's hard to remember a time when hip-hop stars weren't rocking Rasta colors and R&B idols weren't jumping on reggae beats. But that's the way it was just a few years back, before Sean Paul's landmark "DUTTY ROCK" (VP/Atlantic) changed the game.

"We flip the switch and the game just change," as Sean rhymes on the new album. "Dutty Cup music drive them insane." And now it's time for him to "Change The Game" all over again.

The music scene just hasn't been the same since Kingston, Jamaica-born Sean Paul Henriques blazed a firestorm of hit tunes - from "Gimme The Light" to "Get Busy" to "Like Glue" - that went straight from the hardcore dancehall audience to the international market with no remix required. Then came Sean's massive duets, "Baby Boy" (with Beyoncé) and "I'm Still In Love With You" (with Sasha), which

kept the flame burning bright and swelled the ranks of believers even more. Carrying on the work of dancehall superstars like Yellowman, Shabba Ranks, Super Cat, and Beenie Man in bringing the infectious sound of the Kingston streets to a wider audience, Sean Paul proved once and for all that authentic Jamaican dancehall reggae could be embraced as popular music on a global scale.

Besides containing five smash singles, "DUTTY ROCK" was certified RIAA double-platinum in the United States and sold nearly six million copies worldwide.

In the wake of the album's groundbreaking success, Sean racked up numerous prestigious awards, including the Grammy for Best Reggae Album - redefining the category in the process - along with nominations in the Best Male Rap Solo Performance and Best New Artist categories. He won MTV Europe's Best New Artist Award, while earning MTV Video Music Award and American Music Award nominations. He gathered multiple ASCAP/PRS kudos in pop, R&B, hip-hop, rap, and reggae categories, and earned Source, MOBO, Juno, Much Music, and International Reggae and World Music awards.

Sean Paul represented Jamaica on numerous television programs around the world and became the first reggae artist to appear on the cover of VIBE magazine, dressed in the national colors. He took his explosive live show on the road, rocking stadium-sized venues from Vegas to Ethiopia, and then celebrated by visiting the pyramids of Egypt. The amazing part is that nobody saw it coming, not even Sean himself.

"Sometimes I almost have to sit down and ask myself, 'Did we really do all that?'" says Sean, posted up behind the mixing board inside the Kingston headquarters of 2 Hard Productions. "Almost six million records sold? That's crazy! Years ago that was just a dream. Well, it's time to make it happen again."

With "THE TRINITY," Sean Paul's set to do that and then some. Working with some of the hottest young producers on the Jamaican dancehall circuit - Steven "Lenky" Marsden, Don Corleone, Renaissance Crew, and Snowcone, to name a few - Sean spent three years completing his third album. And although many of the biggest names in hip-hop wanted to work with him, Sean is proud to say that "it was all done right here in the Third World." Hence "trinity," a spiritual concept that signifies a unity of three in one. It's been said that three is a magic number, and "THE TRINITY" is definitely a blessed piece of work. Sean possesses an almost super-natural ability to create irresistible hooks that can fill up any dance floor.

Maybe that's why the ladies love them some Sean Paul. "As the world turns and as time burns, girl you know I'm gonna be there," Sean pledges on "Ever Blazin'," a track that reunites him with Lenky, producer of his number one smash, "Get Busy." Lenky's dreamy "Masterpiece" riddim provides the backdrop as Sean testifies about "a love that's never-ending." On the old-school dancehall romp "Yardie Bone," Sean joins forces with rising dancehall star Wayne Marshall, spitting game in full papi chulo mode. "Internationally speaking," as Sean puts it, "we got the girls them tweaking."

The Latin fan base has had Sean's back from day one, and he's always shown love in return, even releasing a Spanish version of "Punkie" on his last album. Since then, the Spanish-language dancehall hybrid known as reggaetón has become muy caliente on urban radio. "I see reggaetón as just another cousin to reggae music," says Sean, who teamed up with Puerto Rican sensation Daddy Yankee for a track on "THE TRINITY." Sean got to know reggaetón artists like Tego Calderón, Ivy Queen, and Don Omar when they were all coming up in New York's Latin clubs. "I wish them all the best, and I definitely represent with them," he says. "But I'm not gonna change my style for anybody. I'm a dancehall artist all the way."

"THE TRINITY" finds Sean Paul doing what he's always done best. "You done know we got to take care of the ladies," he says," and I'm still giving you those party vibes." But this time out he's also expanding his artistic reach, with a marked growth in terms of composition and production. "'Gimme the Light' had like two verses and a chorus," Sean observes. "Most of these songs have three verses with a bridge part. So there's growth that way, and also in the deepness of some of the tunes. I can still do songs like 'Breakout' and 'Give It Up To Me' and the hype things for the ladies, but on the more serious side now, you got a song like 'I'll Take You There.' It's still a party tune, but there's a violin on the track that sounds sad to me, and I think it perfectly matches what I'm saying about how we're all tired of the killing and blood spilling. Cause we reach a place where all over the world, people are just tired of that. And we still wanna live life. We still wanna party and socialize and do we thing in a safe environment. And I remembered that Staples Singers song, so I say, 'Yo, I'll take you to that dream place where you can be as free as you wanna be. Let's party there.'"

But at home and abroad, planet earth seems to be stuck in a state of war and fear. "We had 600 people killed here in Jamaica in the last six months," says Sean. "I can't stop talking about it, and I will keep talking about it. This is not Iraq where they're fighting about oil. Brothers have been fighting and killing each other for a few dollars. It's madness." But the message coming through "THE TRINITY" is that even in the darkest times, people have to find a way to enjoy their lives. "Life is a gift and you must treasure it," he says. "We're all here for a certain period of time, and we're definitely gonna leave one day. Butterflies have two weeks, we have sometimes 90 years, sometimes 30 - we just don't know, but we're definitely going somewhere after this. In the meantime, the important thing is to make the most of the time we have without taking away from anybody else."

Such deep meditations found their way onto "THE TRINITY" in songs like "Never Gonna Be The Same," Sean's tribute to his friend Daddigon, who was gunned down earlier this year on the streets of Kingston. "He was one of my best friends in the first three or four years of my career," says Sean. "One of the first youth we used to roll spliff with and whatnot. It's not gonna be the same without him." During one of their freestyle sessions in 1994, Daddigon came up with the name of The Dutty Cup Crew, which Sean has represented ever since.

"If that youth wasn't there, who knows what would have happened?" Sean contemplates. "Without Daddigon freestyling about 'Dutty Cup' I wouldn't have named my album Dutty Rock. I wouldn't have said 'Dutty yeah.' I don't know what would have come..." Although Sean and Daddigon parted ways in 1998, whenever the old friends crossed paths, they would make plans to get together. Somehow they never quite got around to it. Then, in early 2005, Sean got a call from his manager Jeremy Harding informing him that Daddigon had been murdered. After a period of intense mourning, he decided to pen a song in tribute to his friend.

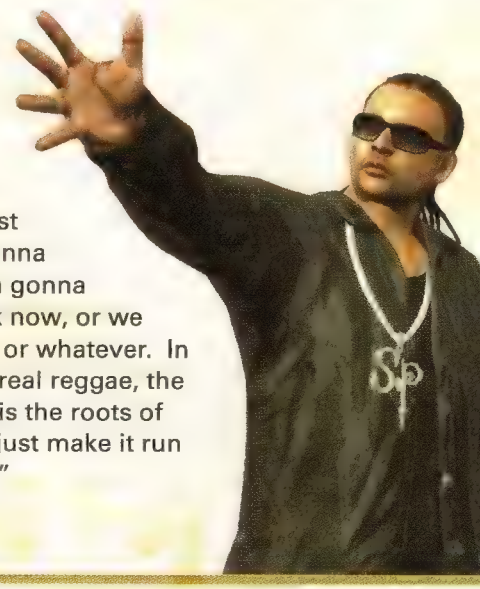
"One day I tried to just take that sadness and all that energy and express it," Sean says. "So I took a couple weeks to sit down and write that tribute song for Daddigon. I mention some other people too, like [the slain Jamaican dancehall icon] Bogle, and I mention Peter Cargill and Shorty Malcolm, who were two of the biggest footballers on the Reggae Boys team who died. And I mention my aunt who died in a car crash, and another sister named Nicole who was one of my first girlfriends. She died from a brain tumor. That song is basically for all the people we've lost. And it's saying, 'We gonna miss your legacy - all of y'all. But we'll keep burning up the flame in your memory. Cause you weren't here for nothing. Nobody's gonna take nuttin' from you.'"

"THE TRINITY" represents the third leg of a journey that began with Sean Paul's 1999 album, "STAGE ONE," a straight-up dancehall release on VP Records that spawned the urban radio hits "Deport Them" and "Hot Gal Today" with Mr. Vegas. Sean got another chance to shine on the 2000 "BELLY" soundtrack alongside Mr. Vegas and DMX. Then came his 2002 breakthrough hit, "Gimme The Light," which started rocking on street corners before the video directed by Lil' X got the whole world trying to learn those sexy dance steps. The next single was "Get Busy," which combined Sean Paul's energetic flow with Lenky's massive "Diwali" riddim to create the first 100% Jamaican-produced number one pop single in history.

Meanwhile, his collaborations with The Clipse on the "Grindin'" remix and Busta Rhymes on the remixes for "Make It Clap" and "Gimme The Light" generated plenty of street heat. "Baby Boy," Sean's duet with Beyoncé, shot to the top of the pop charts in November 2003. The following year, it was Sean Paul and Sasha's slow and sexy rub-a-dub classic "I'm Still In Love With You" that became a staple of urban and pop radio. Since then Sean has kept his core audience happy with juggling joints like "Get With It Girl" and "Straight Up." He recently blessed The Neptunes' new single with rap duo The Clipse, and applied his golden touch to the Tony Touch collabo "Ay Ay Ay."

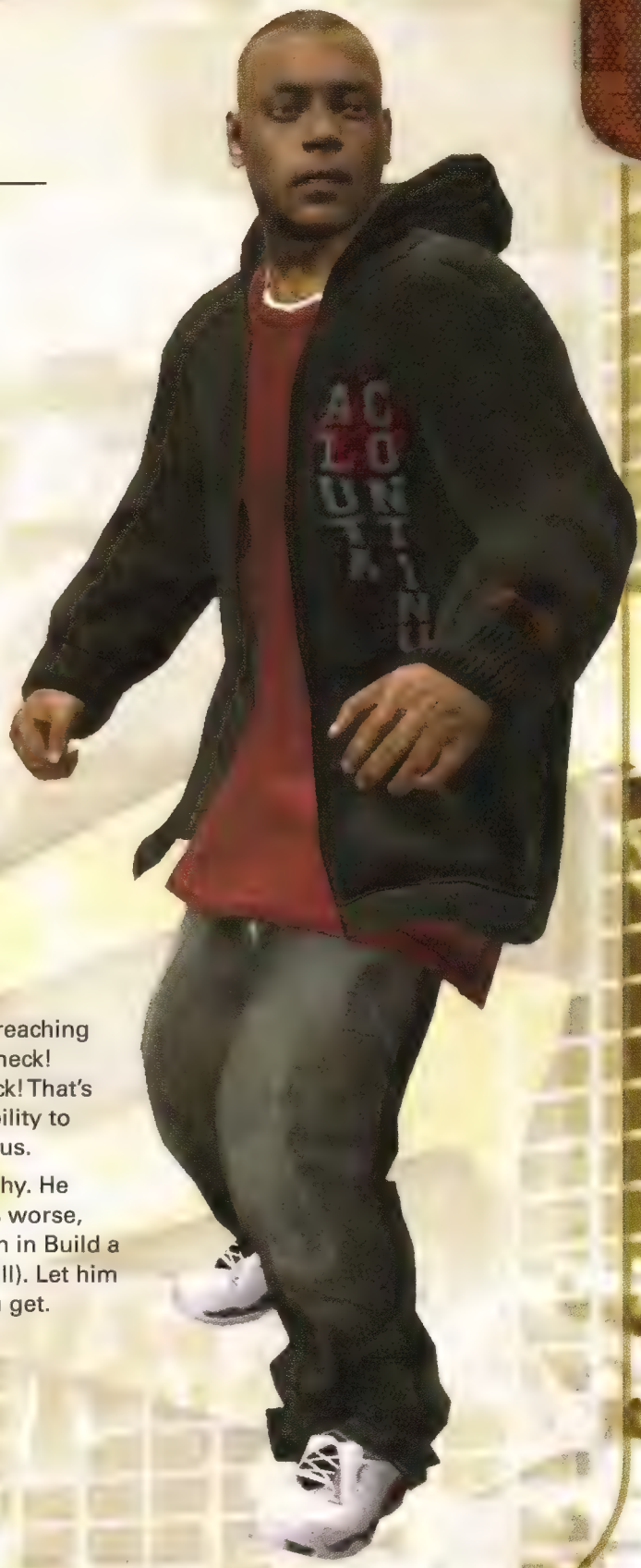
With "We Be Burnin'," the first single from the new album, impacting at radio and video outlets, and with "THE TRINITY" set to drop, Sean Paul is ready to rock the world the only way he knows how to rock it - Dutty style.

"My first album was much more dancehall than anything else," Sean recalls. "No reggae on it, not even a one drop. The second album, "DUTTY ROCK," did kinda blend those three sounds: It sound like dancehall, it sound like reggae, it sound like hip-hop. Now we come back round to this album here. We got the girls tunes, the one drop tunes, the fast kick-up stuff, and just everything... But basically 'THE TRINITY' is a mixture of those three elements. I'll just stick to that. I ain't gonna try and say, 'Okay, I'm gonna have a total R&B track now, or we need to go reggaetón or whatever. In Jamaica we have the real reggae, the real dancehall, which is the roots of hip-hop. So why not just make it run and keep on doing it?"



STAN

Brawler	*Fighting Style*	*Default Song 1*	*Default Song 2*
Stan the Stalker	Street Kwon Do	"Ante Up" by M.O.P.	"It's Going Down" by Yung Joc



Your goal is to become an Icon, for sure. But you gotta know that reaching that goal comes with its own set of troubles. Shady promoters? Check! Bootleggers? Check! Gold diggin' groupies? Check! Stalkers? Check! That's where Stan the stalker comes in. He may be a big fan, but his inability to draw the line between admiration and stalker behavior is dangerous.

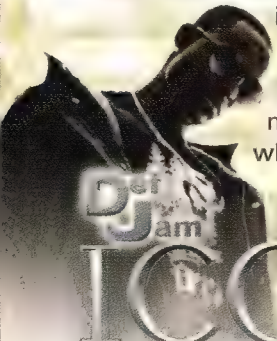
Unfortunately, his behavior doesn't leave much room for sympathy. He quickly turns violent and becomes a real problem. Making matters worse, he's a formidable Street Kwon Do fighter. When you encounter him in Build a Label, or anywhere else, keep your distance (he is a stalker, after all). Let him approach with powerful attacks and counter him every chance you get.

STICKY FINGAZ

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Sticky Fingaz	Beatboxer	"Soul Survivor" by Yung Joc	"We Fly High" by Jim Jones

Sticky Fingaz broke into the music industry in 1992 helping to form the multi-platinum rap group Onyx, which became one of the most menacing rap groups the east coast has ever seen. This group brought a high amount of energy to rap music and accompanied it by a vibe that earned their first album, *Bacdafucup*, double platinum success; this came at a time where multi-platinum rap sales were near unheard of.

Sticky went on to release more albums with his crew Onyx; however, he also had his eye on an acting career. He started as a drug-dealing sidekick to Fredro Starr, his cousin and group member, in Spike Lee's *Clockers*. He was also featured in the movies *Blade* and *Over There* in addition to doing TV work on *New York Undercover*.



"Music and acting are the same...you need the same amount of energy... and who's got better timing than a musician?"

As time went on, so did the albums and acting appearances. In 1995, Sticky and his crew released the acclaimed *All We Got Iz Us*, which most hardcore Onyx fans chose as their favorite album to date. The album showed high signs of movie-esque material through it's dreary content, song interludes, and subject matters; this further proved Sticky's acting ability on the big screen.

During this time Sticky went onto do countless TV show spots, movies, modeling gigs, and more. In 1998, he returned for Onyx's 3rd album, *Shut Em Down*, with huge praises from both old and new fans. In 2000, Sticky Fingaz finally got his time to shine off screen with the release of his first solo album *Black Trash: The Autobiography of Kirk Jones*. The album was a critical success, receiving four mics from The Source helping to make it one of the most creative and energetic albums in hip-hop history. Due to weak publicity, no club/dance tracks, and extreme amounts of delay for the albums release, the album was not a financial success. However, this didn't seem to matter because for most of the people that heard it, the album was nothing short of incredible.

The album brought Sticky's talent to the table; this allowed him to do what he wanted. "Def Jam always wanted me to be the mad face nigga, like I never smiled or something. Sometimes I'm mad. Sometimes I'm not. I want to show the true Sticky Fingaz." The album in its entirety played like a movie, even using Universal Pictures' theme song at the start of the first track. As listeners went through the album, they were taken through an audio-movie where Kirk Jones (Stick Fingaz' real name) went through part of his life.

His creativity is not only limited to music; he is currently producing a hip hop oriented board game as well as a major motion picture titled *A Day in the Life*. The entire movie will be rapped by actors, which include Fredro Starr, Mekhi Pheipher, Treach, and many more. A 3rd album is also on the table; however, no one really knows what to expect in the future from the multi-talented and overly energetic rapper/actor.

T.I.

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
T.I.	Street Kwon Do	"What You Know" by T.I.	"Top Back" by T.I.

Clifford "Tip" Harris, better known as Atlanta rapper T.I., returns with KING, his fourth major label full-length solo release, and third through his joint venture deal with Atlantic Records. Picking up where his previous effort left off, KING builds on the sound and the success of 2004's URBAN LEGEND – a blockbuster project that debuted at the top of Billboard's "Top R&B/Hip Hop Albums" chart and at #7 on the Billboard 200, spawned the RIAA platinum-certified single, "Bring Em Out" and the Grammy-nominated smash, "U Don't Know Me," registered over three million in ringtone sales, and was certified RIAA platinum, going on to sell over 1.3 million copies in the U.S. alone.

Alongside its commercial success, URBAN LEGEND secured a multitude of award nominations, including Favorite Rap/Hip-Hop Album at the 2005 American Music Awards, Best Rap Video ("U Don't Know Me") at the 2005 MTV Video Music Awards, and Choice Rap Track ("Bring Em Out") at the 2005 Teen Choice Awards, plus landing T.I. his second annual VIBE Award for Street Anthem of the Year ("U Don't Know Me"). The kudos culminated with his Grammy nomination for "U Don't Know Me" for Best Rap Solo Performance, sharing the category with Common, Eminem, 50 Cent, Ludacris, and Kanye West.

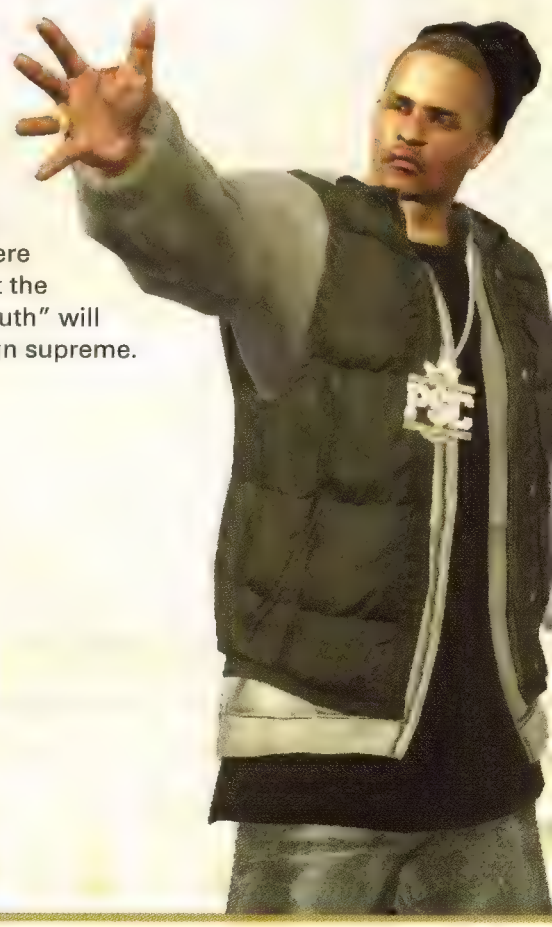
Since he first burst on the scene in 2001 with his impressive solo debut, I'M SERIOUS, T.I. has proven himself to be more than just a maker of hit records. In addition to the millions of albums sold worldwide over the course of his career, T.I.'s striking good looks, impeccable sense of style, and charismatic personality have catapulted him onto cover of VIBE (January '05) and into the fashion pages of GQ (May '05), earned him the award for Most Stylish Male at the 2005 BET Awards, and secured him spots on BET's "All Shades of Fine: 25 Hottest Men of the Last 25 Years" and Teen People's "The 25 Hottest Stars Under 25" lists. In April 2005, he became the first rapper to appear/perform on the hit Fox TV show, "The O.C." and he's been featured prominently in print ad campaigns for Reebok's S. Carter sneaker line and Sean John clothing. T.I. will make his acting debut on March 31st 2006 in the Overbrook/Warner Bros. feature film, 'ATL,' directed by famed video director Chris Robinson.

Over the years, T.I. has also continued to expand his already impressive business portfolio. In 2005 alone, he launched his own film production company, Grand Hustle Films, signed a multi-artist joint venture deal for his label, Grand Hustle, with Atlantic Records, and established a music publishing deal for Grand Hustle Music with Warner Chappell. He also co-executive produced the soundtrack to the hit film, *HUSTLE & FLOW*, and released the collection through Grand Hustle/Atlantic and did the same for the debut album of his group P$C, 25 TO LIFE.

T.I. has stepped up his community involvement as well, taking the lead on several initiatives to help the victims devastated by Hurricane Katrina, including personally donating $50,000 to the relief effort while leading an on-air Labor Day pledge drive on Atlanta's V-103 FM that raised over $263,000 for Mississippi rapper David Banner's "Heal the Hood" Foundation. He also partnered with David Banner and Atlanta newcomer Young Jeezy for a two-day food and clothing drive at Atlanta's Club Vision and co-headlined a massive benefit concert on September 17, sharing the bill with heavyweights such as Nelly, OutKast's Big Boi, and David Banner – with 100 percent of the proceeds going to "Heal the Hood."

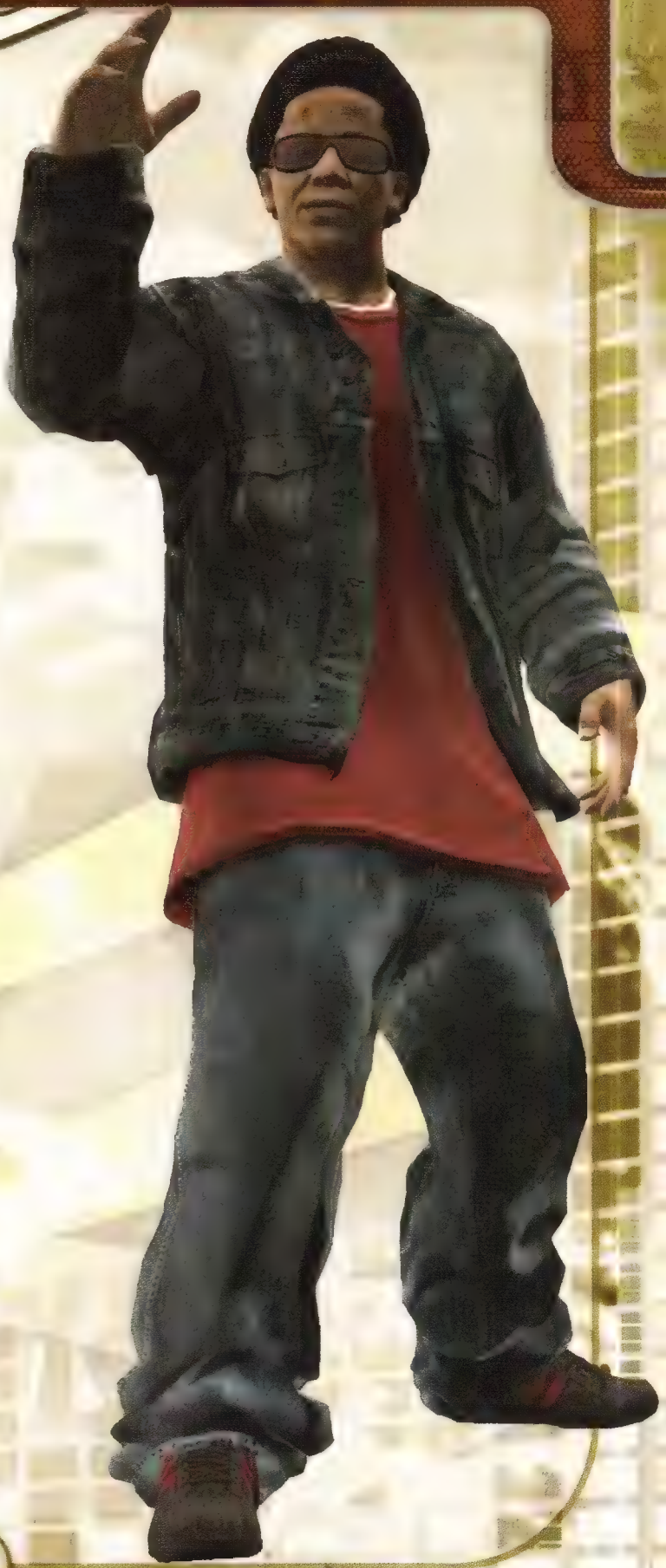
In addition to his Hurricane Katrina relief efforts, T.I. worked with troubled youths at Paulding Detention Center in Atlanta, provided scholarships for single parent families at Boys and Girls Clubs, and headlined Boost Mobile's RockCorps concert at New York's Radio City Music Hall, which featured such performers as Fat Joe, Slim Thug, and Kanye West, and was held exclusively for community service volunteers. In June 2005, The Lisa "Left Eye" Lopez Foundation, named for the deceased member of multi-platinum female group TLC, and Atlanta's V-103 honored T.I. with the 2005 Lisa Lopez Award for groundbreaking achievements in music and community service. With this steady list of growing accomplishments in music, business, and community service, it's no surprise that Pharrell Williams of multi-platinum production team the Neptunes has called T.I. the "Jay-Z of the South."

KING marks the next phase in the evolution of T.I. as an artist. Featuring production by longtime collaborators the Neptunes, as well as Mannie Fresh, DJ Toomp, and a host of others, KING delivers just the mix of street bangers and club hits that the fans and the critics have come to expect from T.I.. Says T.I., "This album is a solidification of why I call myself the 'King of the South,' why I'm known as that, and a continued progression of what I've done musically and with my career." With surefire hits like "What You Know" and "Why You Wanna..." packed on to the project, coupled with T.I.'s tireless focus and determination to progress and stay on top of his game, there is no doubt that the "King of the South" will continue to reign supreme.



TEGO

Brawler	*Fighting Style*	*Default Song 1*	*Default Song 2*
Tego	Ghetto Blaster	"Head in the Zone" by Sean Paul	"One Blood" by The Game



Tego Calderón was born in Santurce, Puerto Rico, in 1972. He grew up in Río Grande and Carolina, areas of Puerto Rico that maintain some of the strongest Afro-Caribbean influences on the island. Throughout his childhood Calderón was exposed by his parents to the ground-breaking music of salsa legend Ismael Rivera, as well as to Latin jazz. "I grew up and identified myself with Ismael Rivera's distinctive style and soon I was old enough to understand what course I wanted to follow in music."

Determined to take his place in the music world, Tego explored a diversity of musical influences, transforming himself into an accomplished musician as well as vocalist. He attended the Escuela Libre de Música of Puerto Rico, where he concentrated on percussion studies, while also mastering composition and lyrics.

In the late-1980's,Tego moved to Miami, where he graduated from Miami Beach Senior High School. It was there that Calderón began to soak up the influences of American hip-hop. Hearing the California gangsta rap troupe N.W.A. proved pivotal. "It really caught my attention, it was something that I related to, and I decided I wanted to be a rapper," Calderón said.

Moving back to Puerto Rico, Calderón also found a new appreciation for such Jamaican dancehall performers as Buju Banton, Super Cat, and Ninja Man. Around the same time,the Reggaetón movement began to become a force in Puerto Rico. Calderón began to forge his own multicultural rap style, earning a reputation as a street poet with a fresh musical approach.

He credits fellow Puerto Rican hip-hop pioneer Vico C with inspiring him to rap in Spanish, instead of imitating the English catch phrases of African-American hip-hop. Establishing himself as a new voice of the streets, he made a series of appearances on best-selling Latin hip-hop compilations. A remix collection entitled "EL ENEMY DE LOS GUASÍBIRI," released in 2004, consisted largely of tracks which had appeared on those early compilations.

"EL ABAYARDE" released in 2002, broke sales records in the then-underground Reggaetón genre, selling a remarkable 50,000 on the first day of its release, and Calderón became an overnight Latin superstar. Just three months after making his solo debut, Calderón was greeted with a tumultuous response at a sold-out concert at Roberto Clemente Coliseum in San Juan.The following day, he made history when he became the first rap artist to perform at the traditional National Day of Salsa celebration.

When Tego first headlined New York's Madison Square Garden in August 2003, The New York Times heralded him as "the most forward-looking performer" of the artists on the bill, noting that "Mr. Calderón made the best case for Reggaetón as music with room to grow."

In October 2004, when he returned to the stage of the Garden as the star of the breakthrough "Megatón 2004" event, attendance had swelled from 12,000 to a sold-out 20,000,with a large number of non-Spanish-speaking fans in the audience. "The crowd erupted into a frenzy," noted the Village Voice. "The fruit of Tego's crossover appeal was palpable...They were bopping their heads and flailing their arms to the universal beat."

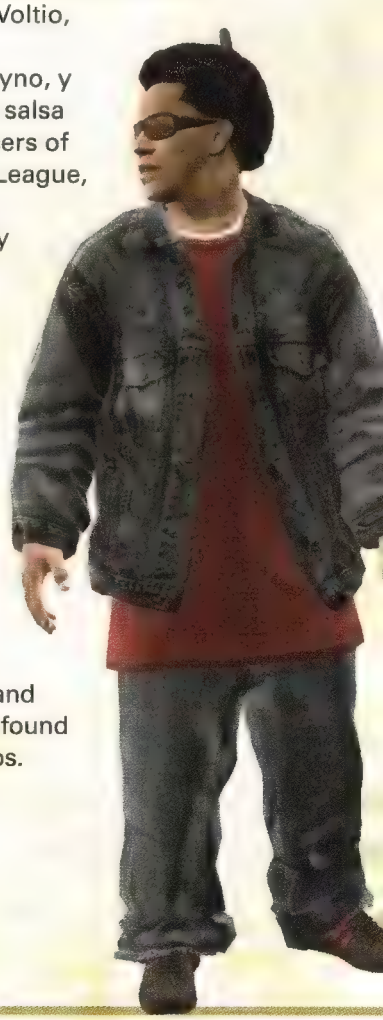
As Latin rappers have been embraced by the American hip-hop culture, Calderón has been featured on a variety of mix tapes and has been invited to add his trademark vocal style to collaborations and remixes by the likes of Fat Joe's Terror Squad (the #1 smash,"Lean Back"), Usher, 50 Cent, Cypress Hill, and Wyclef Jean, among others.

From his appearances at New York's annual Puerto Rican Day parades in 2004 and 2005, to becoming the first Spanish-language artist to be featured on New York's Power-105, Calderón has been breaking cultural barriers. In a cover story on Calderón and Reggaetón,the Village Voice noted that Tego "almost single-handedly... steered his country's dominant youth culture out of the island and Latino neighborhoods, and into the American stream of pop consciousness." Among Calderón's achievements are Latin Grammy and Billboard Award nominations, a Source Award for "International Artist of the Year," a Tu Música award, and nominations for La Gente and Lo Nuestro awards.

In the spring of 2005, Calderón signed with Atlantic Records via a deal with his own Jiggiri Records label -- becoming the first Reggaetón artist to ink a global pact with a major label. His second proper album,"THE UNDERDOG / "EL SUBESTIMADO", is due out from Jiggiri/Atlantic Records later this year.

Calderon defines this new production as a journey through the Afro-Caribbean musical scene which masterfully brings together Reggae, Dance Hall, Salsa, Bomba, Rumba, and the Deep South feeling of the blues.

This new production is will feature the guests appearances of Buju Banton,Voltio, Bataklán, Eddie Dee, Luis Cabán,Yandel, Zion, Chyno Nyno, y Don Omar and the legendary salsa singer Oscar de Leon. Producers of the caliber of Cookee, Major League, Salaam Remi, Eric Figueroa, Luny Tunes, DJ Nelson, Danny Fornaris, DJ Nesty, Naldo, DJ Joe, DJ Fat and Echo & Diesel, also collaborated in the 21 track CD.



Tego's music is an experimental nexus of urban Hip Hop roughness with the poetic Caribbean rhythms transmitted by the early sounds of Salsa music. Not only is Tego, like many of his Salsa heroes, a formidable storyteller...he also incorporates the lyrical percussion and fine rhythmic lines that can be found in the works of Luis Pales Matos.

THE GAME

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
The Game	Black Panther	"One Blood" by The Game	"Scream on 'Em" by The Game

The Game is from the birthplace of Gangsta' Rap, Compton, CA. But this is a new, different Westside story, one that joins with the Eastside while paying respects to rap's hardcore pioneers of the '80s, NWA. The Game, a former gangbanger who turned to rap after being shot five times and left for dead, is about peace not war. Working closely with Dr. Dre on his debut album; This Game is for real.

The Documentary, (Aftermath/G Unit/Interscope), the debut album from The Game (a/k/a Jayceon Taylor), announces the arrival of the most significant West Coast gangsta rapper since Snoop Dogg more than a decade earlier. With guest spots from 50 Cent, Nate Dogg and several others, as well as producers from Dr. Dre to Kanye West to Just Blaze and tracks such as "Like Father Like Son," "Church For Thugs," "Dreams," "Where I'm From" and "Westside Story," The Documentary resurrects the truth, spirit and hope of hardcore rap.

"A lot of rap today is bubblegum bullshit that says nothing and means nothing to anybody living in the 'hood," says the 24-year-old with a tattoo of NWA's Eazy-E on his right forearm. "I'm not knocking anybody's hustle but I can't feel what's in hip-hop today. Everybody's rapping but they're not saying anything. NWA, Biggie, 2Pac, Snoop and Jay-Z all had something to say then Biggie, Pac, and Eazy died and it was devastating. We almost let rap die until the Great White Hype (Eminem) saved hip-hop and 50 dropped the gangsta wake-up call. I feel like it's my turn now and I can fill the shoes."

What all three have in common is the guiding hand of Dr. Dre, Compton's own and one of the founding members of NWA. "The best moment I've had in rap was walking into his studio in 2002 and Dre saying he heard a mix tape of my freestyles and wanted to sign me," says Game. "Trying to act cool? I was frozen. I'm still starstruck with Dre. He's been almost 20 years at the top. That I get to soak up the game from a musical genius like him gives me a 20-year head start on everybody else. He's like the father I never had. Everything about a father throwing a baseball to his son in the suburbs, that's what NWA was to me. They were the only role models I had besides Michael Jordan. Eazy was the father of hardcore and I don't understand why he only gets honorable mention when people talk about rap."

Game's beloved grandmother nicknamed him Game because he was always game for anything—basketball, running track, riding bikes, playing in the streets. Family problems related to his father caused him to be placed in a foster home from the third grade to the ninth grade. "My childhood was f**ked up but it wasn't really that different from anyone else who lived in the 'hood," he says. Soon after he was returned to his mother, one of his older brothers, Jevon, was shot and killed. The Game then started running behind another older brother, Big Fase 100, who had been taken in by the Cedar Block Piru Bloods, even though they grew up in a Crip neighborhood called Santana Block on Compton's East Side.

Fase tried to keep him away from thuggin' but, once it became clear that Game was going to be there, his brother was determined to teach him how to survive on the streets. Then, after graduating high school in 1999, an older adopted brother, Charles, was shot and killed. "People don't know what type of toll that takes on your life," he says. "Especially being young and just fresh out in the world." A one-time star shooting guard for Compton High School who was offered scholarships to various colleges, the 6-foot-4 Game now started gangbangin' hard—car thefts, drug dealing and shootings. Finding him too much to handle, his mother kicked him out of her house.

In 2000, The Game and his brother moved into the projects in a nearby city and took over its drug trade. Their success attracted rivals. Late on the night of October 1, 2001, Game was alone in their apartment when there was a knock on the door. Game became victim to a home invasion. "That was the biggest learning experience ever in my life. This sounds crazy but I appreciate that happening to me, because I'd probably be dead if it didn't. Anybody who gets shot and survives feels lucky. On the other hand I went through so much already that I felt somebody owed me. Now I could live out my dreams."

He sent his brother to buy new copies of all the classic rap albums, East Coast and West Coast: Dre's The Chronic, Big's Ready To Die, Jay-Z's Reasonable Doubt, Ice Cube's Death Certificate, Snoop's Doggystyle, 2Pac's All Eyez On Me, every Kool G Rap record, and anything from NWA. He studied them carefully over the next five months. In December 2001, he rapped for the first time. "I mixed everybody's style into one. That's why some people feel that I sound like I'm from the East Coast even though I rap about the West Coast."

He also hopes the purpose of the graphic nature of The Documentary doesn't get twisted. "I'm telling my story. I'm out to please no one but myself. I'm not telling anybody to sell drugs or pick up guns. When I sold drugs it was because it was my last resort, because I had four sisters and an older brother and we were eating Cheerios on Thanksgiving. When I picked up a gun it was because my life was threatened. If you don't want to hear that, then don't listen. I'm not glorifying the life I lived because I wouldn't wish that on anybody. I'm just one human being raised in the 'hood who wanted nothing more than to get out."

His sole regret is that his grandmother—the only person who ever believed he could make it out—passed away before she could see his success, not just in rap but in life: in summer 2003, Game became a father for the first time with son Harlem Caron Taylor. He says the best moment he's ever experienced was watching his son's mother give birth: "That was some next level shit. I've never been so happy. I wanted to bring him into the world so much that I was going, 'Come on!'"

There's more than anger in this next generation NWA. There's pride and even optimism for the future. "I gave all I could to this album, it's me. Enjoy it because it's the last time I'm living it. As humans we grow and the next album will be about how I'm living now--and I'm loving life."

The Game has only just begun.

TROY DOLLAR

Brawler	*Fighting Style*	*Default Song 1*	*Default Song 2*
Troy Dollar	Jah Breaka	"Hate Me Now" by Nas	"Scream on 'Em" by The Game

Troy Dollar is the flashy CEO of Curtis Carver's rival label. He has a reputation for strong-arming his way through contract negotiations and threatening anyone who gets in the way of his business. He is cocky and entertaining, and knows how to charm the press as well as the ladies, but underneath his Cheshire-cat grin lies frighteningly violent potential. His boisterous personality and dangerous delivery jockeys between comedic and terrifying.

WHEATLY

Brawler	*Fighting Style*	*Default Song 1*	*Default Song 2*
Wheatly	Muay Fly	"One Blood" by The Game	"Scream on 'Em" by The Game

Wheatly is the strong-armed leader of a police strike force in N.Y.C. that focuses on gang- and drug-related issues. Whether justified or not, he spends most of his attention on members of the hip-hop community, based on circumstantial connections and six degrees of criminal association. He's confident, tough, capable, and savvy. He can see through veiled threats and will often strike before anyone can strike at him. He can be manipulative, though some might suggest he's not always the one calling the shots....

YOUNG JEEZY

Brawler	Fighting Style	Default Song 1	Default Song 2
Young Jeezy	Black Panther	"Soul Survivor" by Young Jeezy	"I Do This" by Young Jeezy

No matter what is being supplied, a hustler is only as good as his word. With Atlanta serving up some of the hottest product in the rap game, native son Young Jeezy stands as one of the most exciting merchants of cool to emerge in years. Thanks to underground testimonials like "Air Forces" and "Chuuch," Jeezy's street swagger and authentic style has quickly made believers out of some the biggest players in the game, from Fabolous to P. Diddy. In his native Atlanta, and throughout the south, Young Jeezy has created nothing short of a movement. Now the world will get to find out what insiders have been buzzing about when his Def Jam debut, Let's Get It: Thug Motivation 101 drops this summer.

Like many hustlers on the mic, rapping wasn't in Jeezy's original game plan. As CEO of Corporate Thug Entertainment, Jeezy was content to stack his paper from the background.

"Before music I was just trying to survive out this motherf**ker. I had other artists, some local cats off the street, but it didn't work out," explains the twenty-five year old Georgia native. "So I just decided to do it myself. Ain't nobody gonna go as hard as you gonna go. I saw the bigger picture at the time. I have a way with words and I know how to hustle."

Having lost many things in his life—family, friends and time (a prison bid that he doesn't like to give too much light)—Jeezy had a sense of urgency about his music. So he hit the mixtape circuit with exclusive tracks recorded with longtime collaborator Shawty Red. With over 100,000 mixtapes and over 200,000 Trap Or Die DVD's sold in a little more than a year, Def Jam decided to invest in the youngster and made him the most recent signee to the label.

"Basically, I'm a real nigga so I can relate more to a lot of cats," Jeezy says of his appeal. "I don't just do music for the clubs, I do music for the struggle. I do music for everyday niggas, the kids who ain't got no sense of direction. I'm trying to restore some of the morals back into the game, as far as the street."

What sets Young Jeezy's music apart is his ability to bring color and flash to a story that has been told so many times before. He's a true digital age artist who doesn't need 16 bars to develop a picture in your head. When he snaps off a verse the image is simple enough for everyone to feel it instantly.

"In one night ten bitches, eight bottles of Cris/forty grand just to make you stare at my wrist" he rattles off on his hit "Air Forces." Jeezy's undeniable swagger has made everyone from UGK's Bun B to Sean "P. Diddy" Combs stand up and take notice. But it's the folks grinding from day-to-day that will get the most out of Jeezy's street scriptures.

"I'm just real to myself. Just believing in what I can do. If you have goals it gives a nigga something to be motivated about," he says. "We stood on the same concrete at one time. With the same mindframe. My stuff is to motivate them. Letting you know where I'm from and what I've seen so you can get something out of it."

The streets responded by snatching up his mixtapes by the trunkload. But now that he has fans on the hook, Jeezy is ready to reel them in slow with this full length.

"I did the mixtape run, but on mixtapes you can't really give people you," he reasons. " I think people will really relate to the album. I ain't come into this for no broads or a wristwatch or a car. I came into this shit for a spot. I'mma reality kicker. I'm not gonna tell you what you wanna hear because it sounds good, I'mma give it to you raw."

Songs like the revealing "Let Me Talk To 'Em" show Jeezy apologizing for many of the wrongs in his life and attempting to set the next generation straight about the dark side of life in the traps. "A lot of the cats I looked up to that bought me school clothes and things, I lost them," he says. "That's why I'm here now."

Setting the backdrop for his reality are producers Mannie Fresh - who's "Boom Boom Clap" powers Let's Get It's searing first single "And The What" - Jazze Pha and Shawty Red to name a few. The guest line up is a who's who of southern rap, but there will be plenty of Young Jeezy to bump from the coups to the corners.

"My whole thing is I want to restore some more morals back to this street shit," he concludes. "Niggas listen to niggas who rap. I just wanna feed the streets."

PLAYING THE RAP GAME

WHAT'S THE SCENARIO?

Success. It's more than just a word—it's a destination. You came to this town with a unique talent of being able to smack the hell out of anyone stupid enough to cross you, and you're gonna use that talent to turn heads. In time, people will follow you. Women will flock to you. You will be calling the shots. But first you gotta get their attention. Define yourself. Build your style.

If you pull that off properly, you just might get called before hip-hop music mogul Curtis Carver, the man responsible for a couple dozen platinum-selling albums. If you're lucky, he might even offer you a full-time job with real income, looking out for some of his acts and artists. He might even have you manage one or two of them, once he recognizes your skills.

Face it, that's the life you really want. Any punk can throw down in the streets for change, but real success is in the industry. The music game. Hip-hop, to be specific. And considering the "make it happen by any means necessary" mentality you gotta have to "come up," you start with the perfect set of skills.

Rhymes get bitten? You fix it. Beats get stolen? You fix it. Royalties get added up wrong? You fix it. The more you see, the more you realize that that the industry is 5% music and 95% handling your business, whatever that may be. And once you prove your expertise at that art, you'll be on your way.

But watch yourself. Not all spotlights are good. Some of them will be mounted to the sides of unmarked cop cars shadowing you for nonsense. That's when you'll start to see the world behind the curtain. The world that's set against hip-hop and all the "bad influence" that comes with it. Certain powers would love to see it crumble and fall, with no mind for the art and craft it comes from. They only see what they want to see—the criminal backdrop that so many of you and your peers grew out of. And unfortunately, their power is enough to make your lives a living hell.

There will be competition, too, most likely with Carver's biggest rival, Troy Dollar. You've seen him flashing that charismatic smile to the media, always looking fresh in his gear and rocking the illest ice. He is unflinching confidence personified—nothing rattles his cage, except maybe Carver. And pretty soon, you.

But first things first. First you gotta get their attention.

Make sure you're loud about it, too.

THE MAIN PLAYERS

CURTIS CARVER

Played by: Kevin Liles

Curtis Carver got his start working for legendary hip hop mogul Rush, who gave the young entrepreneur his first break in the biz. After an impressive string of platinum-selling albums, Carver was made a key player among Rush's executive staff, eventually assuming the role of CEO when the Icon mysteriously disappeared. Now, Carver runs the label with the same wisdom and guidance of his predecessor, passing on the same types of opportunities to others that he benefited from himself. He sees potential in you, and invites you into his Inner Circle at the beginning of the game, acting as your mentor.

He's cool and confident, wise but with a youthful perspective. He has strong political theories, some of which might be considered "paranoid" or "conspiratorial" by those who aren't aware of the facts he's privy to. He watches out for you like a father or older brother, always imparting sage knowledge.

TROY DOLLAR

Played by: Anthony Anderson

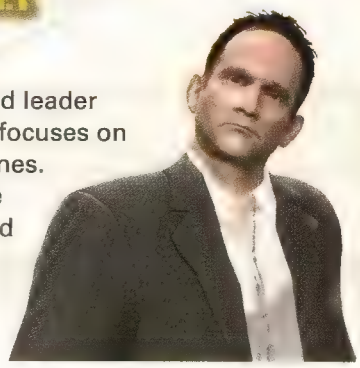
Troy Dollar is the flashy CEO of Curtis Carver's number one rival label. He has a reputation for strong-arming his way through contract negotiations and threatening anyone who gets in the way of his business. He is cocky and entertaining, knowing how to charm the press as well as the ladies, but underneath his Cheshire grin lies a frighteningly violent potential. His boisterous personality and dangerous delivery jockeys between comedic and terrifying.

PLATINUM

Played by: KD Aubert

Raised in a musical household by a happy church-going family, Platinum (then known by her birth-name, Patricia) met and befriended you at a young age. You would often tease each other on the playground in grade-school, but it was usually to cover a genuine pre-adolescent crush. Now, years later, she has established herself as a hot up-and-coming chanteuse on Troy Dollar's label, with a hot single off a respectable second album. Rumors suggest she and Troy are romantically linked, but she denies them, particularly to you when you're reunited in the course of the story. Your childhood romance will re-blossom, and your relationship will prove to be a shelter in a growing conspiratorial storm. She's wholesome and sweet, the perfect girl-next-door. But she's also quite sharp and capable of looking out for herself. She can and will do what it takes to protect herself and those around her, but she will weigh her options thoroughly before making a decision....

LT. FRANK WHEATLY



Played by: Robert Dolan

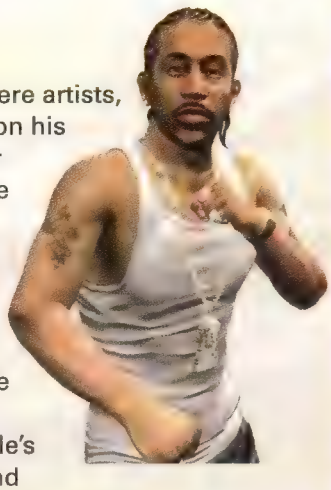
Wheatly is the strong-armed leader of a NYPD strike force that focuses on gang- and drug-related crimes. Whether justified or not, he spends most of his time and attention on members of the hip-hop community, based on circumstantial connections and six-degrees of criminal association. He's very confident, very tough, very capable, and very savvy. He can see through veiled threats and will strike before anyone can strike at him. He can be manipulative, though it's left unclear who is truly calling the shots behind his agenda.

"THE GOOCH"

Played by: Method Man

You and Gooch grew up together, but your lives took different paths in your late teens. You pursued New York and your industry career while Gooch hit the road to see what he could see of the world. He shows up after several years away and helps you in your time of dire need, when circumstances force you to go underground and get out of town. He is your most reliable partner in this story. He's more apt to throw down and face a conflict directly than to search for any strategic alternate routes. He's genuine, reacting from the heart, and he knows enough not to get overwhelmed when things get complicated. He encourages you to take direct action while others might suggest more passive, peaceful routes.

LUDACRIS



Luda is one of Carver's premiere artists, with a number of hit albums on his wall. He has been with Carver longer than anyone else at the label (which says as much about the revolving-door between labels as it does about Luda's age or loyalty). He befriends you early on, and provides a lot of guidance and information from a more casual position than Carver. He's laid back, confident, smart, and friendly. He's the kind of hip-hop celebrity everyone wants to be in with. He has patience, but only until things get unreasonable, or some jack-hole stops listening to reason. That's when he'll raise knuckles and put things right.

FUNKMASTER FLEX

Voiced by: Funkmaster Flex

A popular hip-hop DJ in New York who's been on the air long enough to have seen the rise and fall of legends such as Rush. He has political opinions similar to Carver's, having tracked and witnessed a lot of things that could be considered conspiratorial when added up right. But he's open to discussion, and opens his phone lines to other opinions off the street. He's sarcastic and streetwise, and tells things like he sees them, whether it's a popular opinion or not. He's politically savvy, but can talk about the issues in a way that everyone can understand. He's funny at times, serious at others, and is always engaging.

"WINK"

Played by: Sticky Fingaz

Wink likes to think he's everyone's best friend, but the only one who cares for him that way is himself. He prides himself on being part of Carver's crew and associating with all the talent and artists within the inner hip-hop circle, but frankly he's only out for himself. He will say and do whatever he needs to get what it is he thinks he wants, and then he will try to sweet-talk his way out of a jam by being "Mr. Nice Guy." But that weak charm will only carry him so far—you'll come to know him for the leech that he is. He thinks he's a riot, but he's not. He thinks he's mister suave-and-charming, but he's not. He thinks the ladies love him, but they don't. Deep down, he's the worst kind of hater there is.

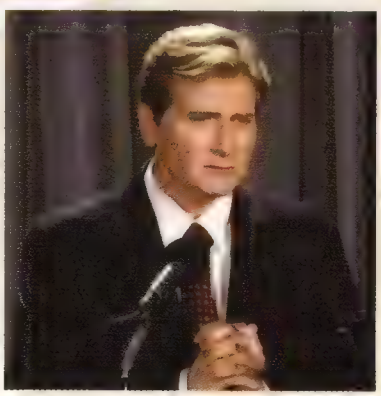
RUSH

Played by: Russell Simmons

Description: Late 40s. Rush was the founder and CEO of a record label, as well as Curtis Carver's mentor before conspiratorial circumstances forced him into hiding a decade ago. Feeling the threat from outside forces, he orchestrated his own disappearance in hopes of protecting those around him. He has since remained underground, watching the industry from whatever mysterious hiding spot he has built for himself, following hot up-'n'-comers like you from a quiet distance. After Carver's murder, Rush contacts you (as an "unknown, mysterious stranger"), helping you out as best as he can from the safety and obscurity of hiding. He introduces himself near the end to provide a key, climactic bit of encouragement and wisdom. Personality: Soft spoken, but very wise and intelligent. He has witnessed the birth and maturity of the hip-hop industry, and has the strength of character it takes to navigate the political gauntlet that surrounds it. He is the moral center of the game, encouraging you to take the noble, non-violent route.

SEN. DAVID JACOBSON

Played by: Gordon Goodman



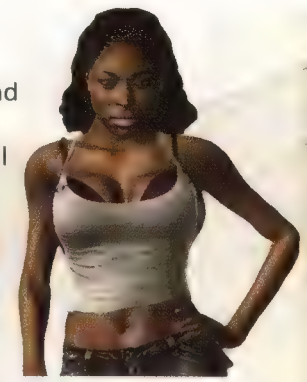
An outspoken man with a trustworthy face, he's the kind of politician people actually listen to and agree with. He's not one of those confrontational pundits who furrows his brow when discussing heavy issues; he'll instead consider the issue thoughtfully, pointing out angles that illustrate the complexity of things. He's young, friendly, likeable, always smiling, and sometimes even funny. In fact, he seems unsuitable for the dog-eat-dog world of politics specifically because he is so charming and seemingly trustworthy. But they say the devil has a nice smile, too....

ROCSI

Played by: Herself

Born Raquel Diaz in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, this engaging TV personality grew up in New Orleans and deejayed her way into Texas and Boston radio markets after graduating Nicholls State University. She eventually made her home at Chicago's Power 92 WPWX-FM, and parlayed that success into hosting BET's *106 & Park*, after beating out more than 5,000 other competitors during the network's New Faces Search.

NINA NICOLE



Nina Nicole shines from the Land of Lincoln and now emanates from the ATL. On stage or in real life, Nina Nicole is a complex individual, but one can best describe her as the grown-up version of that pretty girl in school that little boys had silent crushes on. An actress/model, Nina has an extensive list of magazine and music video appearances to her credit, alongside a growing film role list.

LIRIS CROSSE

Liris grew up in Baltimore and made her own modeling career after deciding the best way to represent herself was by herself. She tapped into the urban market and found herself featured in magazines such as *Essence*, *Honey*, *XXL*, *The Source*, and *Black Elegance*. Soon, other magazines caught on, and she was sought out by *Glamour*, *Seventeen*, *YM*, and *Girl*. She appeared in a number of top music videos for artists such as Jay-Z, Puff Daddy, Jennifer Lopez, and Luscious Jackson. She has since added television and film to her resume, with appearances on *MTV Jams*, BET's *106 & Park*, and films such as Spike Lee's *Inside Man* and John Singleton's *Baby Boy*.

MAYRA VERÓNICA

Mayra Verónica is a star of Hispanic television in America, a regular face on Univision's *Don Francisco Presenta*. Born in Havana, Mayra Verónica Aruca Rodríguez was heavily influenced by her father, Arturo, a singer for the once-popular rock group Los Dada. In addition to several other Univision commitments, Verónica has been featured in ad campaigns for Coca-Cola, L'Oréal, and Burger King. Her beautiful image has appeared in countless magazines, including *FHM* and *Smooth Girl*, and her future in film looks rosy after a number of independent film roles.

CHRISTINE DOLCE

Christine is a former cosmetologist turned model through an immensely successful page on MySpace. Also known as "Forbidden," she has been claimed "The Queen of MySpace" by *Vanity Fair* magazine for having well over 1 million friends on MySpace in a matter of only a couple years after joining. Christine has been featured in such magazines as *Stuff*, *Rolling Stone*, *AskMen*, and *Playboy*. She has also appeared on a number of television programs, including *The Tyra Banks Show* and Jamie Kennedy's *Blowin' Up*. In addition to her MySpace profile, Christine has launched her own successful fashion line, Destroyed Brand.

SUMMER WALKER

Summer Patrice Scalisi Walker was raised in a small town outside of Houston. She was very quiet growing up, and pretty much stuck to herself. She moved to Atlanta only two months after graduating from high school and quickly launched a modeling career. Almost instantly, she was approached to appear in a music video, and she has since appeared in Trillville's "Some Cut," David Banner's "Play," Kanye West's "Gold Digger," T.I.'s "Imma King," Lil Jon's "Snap Ya Fingaz," and Dem Franchize Boyz' "Lean Wit It, Rock Wit It." She has been nominated for Vibe Video Goddess of the Year for 2005 and has done many magazine layouts in *XXL*, *Smooth*, and *Vibe*. She now works toward helping young women and children gain confidence in whatever they want to do in life. Summer is a star, with a great heart, a strong mind, and a bangin' body.

MELYSSA FORD

Melyssa Savannah Ford, born in Toronto, is a model and actress of West Indian, Norwegian, and Russian descent. She attended York University and studied forensic psychology. She was discovered by a music video director at a Toronto nightclub, which helped launch her modeling career. She has been in several music videos, numerous magazines, and a number of television and film appearances. She hosted BET's *How I'm Livin'* series, and is currently the host of BET's lifestyle show *BET Style*. She writes a monthly advice column for *Smooth* magazine and has a successful line of calendars and DVDs.

BUILD A LABEL BASICS

The following section details all the ins and outs of Build a Label Mode. You gotta know what's what to make the best decisions for you and your crew.

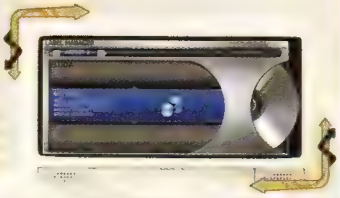
STORY AND DYNAMIC EVENTS

There are two types of events in Build a Label: story events and dynamic events. Story events happen every time you play Build a Label (though perhaps not with the same characters).

Dynamic events occur only when certain conditions are met, such as an artist's satisfaction at reaching a certain value, or certain artist requesting a spontaneous favor. These are not guaranteed to happen. Dynamic events include in-crew rivalries, favor fights, girlfriend visits, and breakups.

A single fight is defined as one fight cycle. In this period, new messages may be delivered, new business events may occur, and all dynamic statistics (such as wealth, satisfaction, etc) are updated.

THE CREW



In the course of Build a Label, you can recruit three artists. Every time a new career is started, the pool of recruitable artists is shuffled. At predefined points in the story, you're presented with a different set of artists to choose from. Your selection not only affects what songs you have to release, but also which artists take part in the artist-specific subplots.

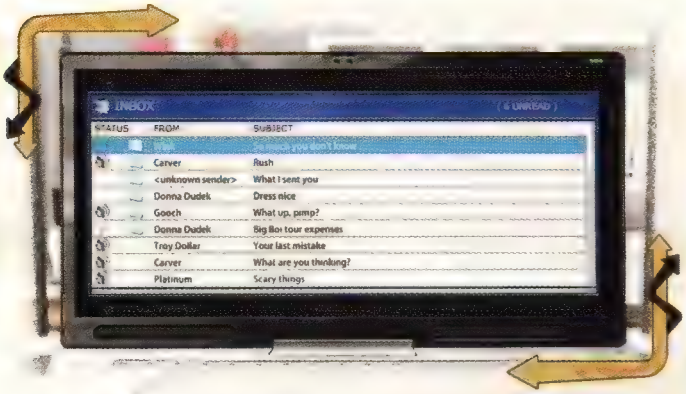
Replaying Build a Label Mode with a new created character resets all options, and reshuffles the pool so that a different set of artists becomes available. Each variation and combination leads to a different gameplay experience, even though the same story events link everything together. Certain combinations might initiate randomly generated rivalries, or trigger unique favor fights, but you never know how a game session will unfold or who you will have an opportunity to recruit. The following table details which artists are available to recruit in any given Build a Label experience.

Artist	*Fighting Style*	*Crew Category*
Paul Wall	Muay Fly	Artist A
Mike Jones	Beatboxer	Artist A
E-40	Black Panther	Artist A
Young Jeezy	Black Panther	Artist A
Jim Jones	Ghetto Blaster	Artist B
Redman	Black Panther	Artist B
Ghostface Killah	Street Kwon Do	Artist B
Sean Paul	Jah Breaka	Artist B
T.I.	Street Kwon Do	Artist C
Big Boi	Beatboxer	Artist C
The Game	Black Panther	Artist C
Lil Jon	Muay Fly	Artist C

THE CRIB

There are three major hot spots in the Crib: wardrobe, travel, and PC. You can access these by walking toward the closet, desk, or door respectively, or by using the hotkeys listed on screen. The wardrobe is where you can view and change your gear from any item you've previously purchased.

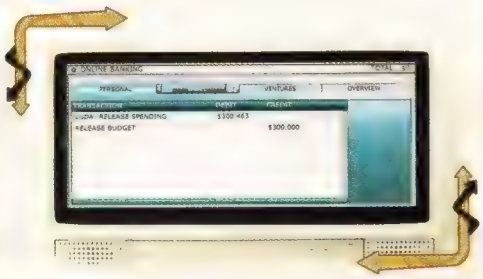
The door allows you to travel to missions, cutscenes, or stores. Mission descriptions explain where a fight will take place, which character you're fighting, and why. The PC is where you will receive all of the important day-to-day information, such as communication from other characters, business status, the Top 5 chart standings, and your current stats (wealth, style, Icon level, etc).



Communications from other characters appear in the PC inbox. New messages are identified by an envelope icon. Voice messages (with audio) are identified by a speaker icon and request messages are identified by a question mark icon.

Request messages *must* be answered once they are opened. The message cannot be closed without approving or denying the request, and once a decision has been made, it cannot be changed. A message may be ignored by not opening it at all, but requests that are ignored for more than one fight cycle automatically expire as if denied. So think twice when they appear. They can have significant impact on a character's satisfaction.

WEALTH



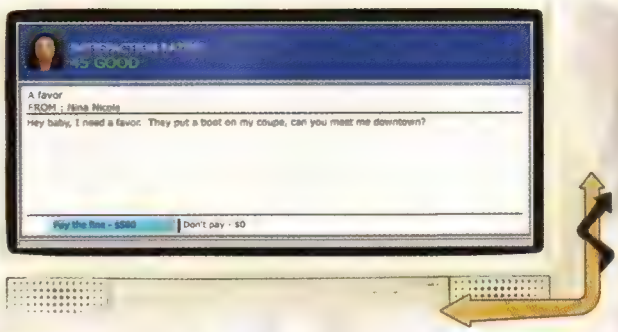
Wealth is how much money you currently have in your bankbook. You know, cheddar, skrilla, green, the moolah. Not only do you use it to buy clothes and accessories, but you also need it to promote your artists' songs, as well as to fulfill requests to keep them happy. Spending money on yourself will heighten your style score, but this will only take you so far if your records aren't selling.

Spending money on artist and girlfriend requests will keep them happy, but can cost you more than they're worth if you don't carefully manage the expense. Spending money on song releases is the key to becoming an Icon. It takes money to make money, so be prepared to dump the most cash into your music.

INTERLUDE

There are different ways of approaching a Build a Label career. Flip to pg. 108 for proven strategy on maximizing your potential.

SATISFACTION



INTERLUDE

Remember that *artists*, as well as girlfriends, lose 5 points every fight cycle.

Artists and girlfriends behave according to their current satisfaction score. Satisfaction ranges from -100 to 100, and is a measure of how pleased they are at the moment. A 100 means they are thrilled with you; a -100 means they are completely ticked, and will very likely bounce on you, if they haven't already.

Their starting score is determined the moment they join you. When artists are recruited, their starting satisfaction score is based on the royalty rate they're given—a higher royalty rate starts them off with a higher satisfaction. A rate of 20 percent starts them with 60 satisfaction; a 50 percent royalty rate starts them with 100 satisfaction.

Girlfriends always start at 65 and degrade 5 points every fight cycle. Their satisfaction scores can be affected by various of the following requests made through the PC inbox at your Crib:

Artists and girlfriends often make financial requests, which must be approved or denied on the spot. Approving the request usually boosts that character's satisfaction; denying the request usually decreases it. Request messages that are ignored for more than one fight cycle expire, and the satisfaction consequences will be the same as if denied.

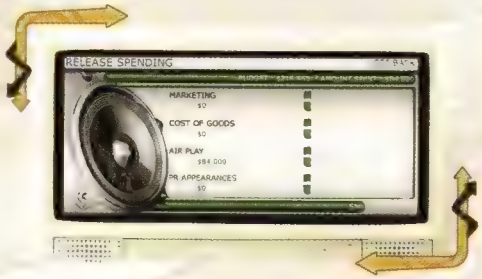
Artists may occasionally ask for favors (usually in the form of fights). These favor fights appear with missions in the Travel Map, and expire in one fight cycle if not selected. If you select the favor fight and win, that artist's satisfaction goes up. If you ignore the favor fight or lose, that artist's satisfaction goes down.

Occasionally, two of your artists have problems with each other, escalating into a rivalry fight. When this happens, you will find two dynamic fights on the Travel Map, one from each beefing artist against the other. You can select to fight as one of these artists against the other. The artist who wins a rivalry fight gets added satisfaction; the loser's satisfaction is lowered. Refusing or ignoring a request for a rivalry fight causes the requesting artist to lose satisfaction, so when a rivalry fight appears on the Travel Map, carefully consider each artist's current satisfaction score.

Particularly high satisfaction can also trigger visits. When a girlfriend has a satisfaction of 85 or higher once you earn the high-end Crib, she may ask to come over for a visit. If you choose to invite her over, her satisfaction goes up. If you ignore this request at the Travel Map, her satisfaction drops.

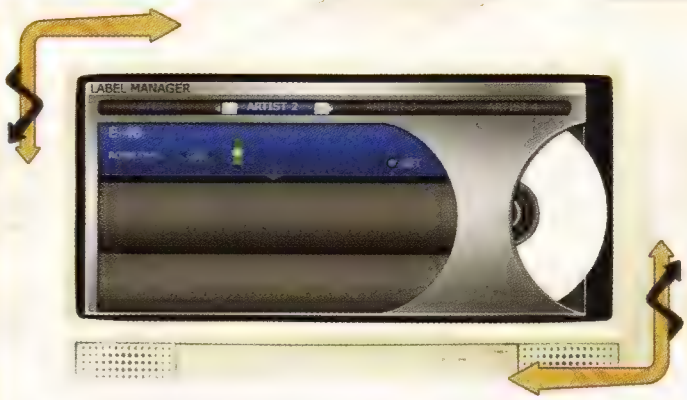
When a character's satisfaction drops to a significantly low level (usually below zero), they begin to complain and grow less productive. An artist who has not produced a second song will be hesitant to start, while dissatisfied girlfriends will start to consider their own options as well. Eventually a low-satisfaction character stops communicating or breaks up with you entirely.

RELEASING SONGS



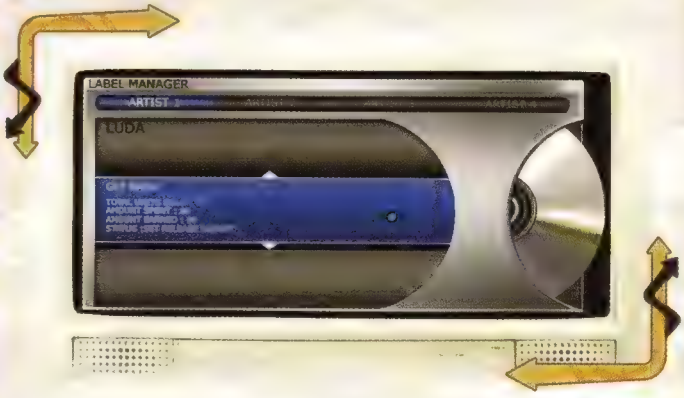
Depending on an artist's starting satisfaction, he will begin production of his first song in one to three fight cycles. The more satisfied an artist is, the faster that artist will get busy. Likewise, the more satisfied he remains, the faster he finishes, also usually within three to six fight cycles.

If an artist is kept satisfied, he goes back into the studio to begin production on a second song. If an artist is not kept satisfied, you may never get that second song to release, so it is wise to keep your boys happy.



When an artist is signed, you need to determine the royalty that artist will receive from all sales, ranging from 20 to 50 percent. A higher royalty means faster productivity, but it also takes a larger cut of the profits out of your bankbook. A lower royalty might leave more profit in your pocket, but runs the risk of slower production time.

Once a song is complete, the artist sends you a message letting you know what's up. You then need to apply Pre-Release Spending to launch the song into the market. A joint will not begin making money until you have released the song through the Label Manager in your PC. Watch the Inbox and Label Manager for important messages and changes.

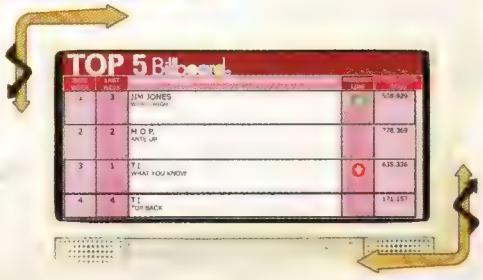


The success of a song depends on how much you spend on pre-release—the amount spent directly affects the number of units sold over its lifetime. Depending on how much you spend on pre-release, an album follows one of three sales curves: pick-up, steady, and burst, as follows:

- Spending $0 to $1 million will give you pick-up sales: a slow launch, but gradually increasing sales that will eventually lead to large returns later in the song's life cycle.
- Spending $1 million to $2 million will lead to steady sales: a respectable launch that peaks after a number of fight cycles, then tapers off slowly.

- Spending $2 million to $3 million results in burst sales: a hot launch, an early peak, and a relatively quick drop-off.

THE BILLBOARD CHART



The Music Chart shows which tracks in the game are currently selling the best during each fight cycle. This includes all songs offered in the game, including those released by non-recruited rival artists. These rival song sales are simulated using the same formula as your songs, randomized at the beginning of each game session. All songs are then ranked according to how many units were sold each fight cycle. Even though a song may have sold more units over its lifetime, another song may be outselling it currently.

STYLE

Your style score affects which potential girlfriends will approach you and how high up the Icon chart you can reach. Style is measured by the sum total of your purchased clothing and jewelry. On average, an item's dollar value determines how many style points you get—$10 equals 1 style point.

In addition to purchased items, certain other decisions can affect style, such as certain purchase requests that could portray you in a stylish manner (like being seen at a hot new club). Having girlfriends also gives you certain style bonuses, but should those girlfriends drop you for some reason, they take their bonuses with 'em.

STATUS

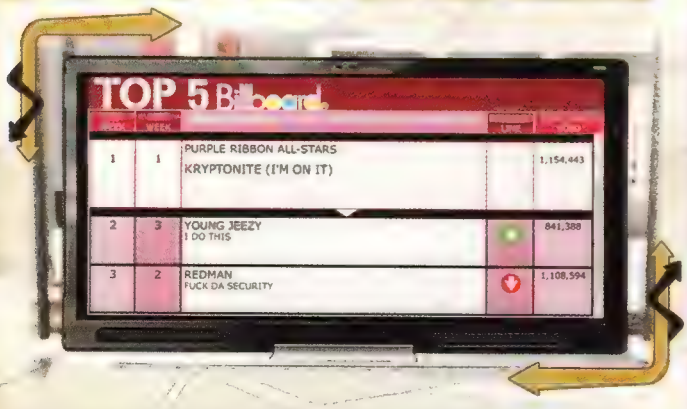
As you release songs and gain wealth and style, you will climb the ranks towards Icon status. Each level demands steeper requirements in style, wealth, and sales success, but you're rewarded along the way with fighting boosts and additional fighting styles. Levels must be completed in the order described on the Icon chart below.

Status	Sales	Style	Wealth	Style Bonus	Boost Bonus
Raw Talent	N/A	0	$0	No bonus	No boost
Hustler	1 gold record	7,000	$100,000	Unchosen fighting style	Max boost to your chosen fighting style
Producer	1 platinum record	25,000	$500,000	Black Panther	Max boost to unchosen fighting style
Hit Maker	1 Multi-platinum record	100,000	$1,000,000	Muay Fly	Max boost to Black Panther
Mogul	5 gold records	300,000	$2,500,000	Beatboxer	Max boost to Muay Fly
Icon	5 platinum records	500,000	$5,000,000	Jah Breaka	Max boost to Beatboxer

BUILD A LABEL STRATEGIES

There are a few ways to play Build a Label, with different ultimate goals to pursue (many of which will unlock Xbox Achievements). Depending what goals you wish to achieve, there are different strategies to use.

STRATEGY 1—TOPPING THE CHARTS



To top the charts every time you release a song, you need to focus on maximizing your sales. You can do a few things to increase your chances.

The chart ranking is based on per-cycle sales. That means you can increase your standings by maximizing the number of units a song sells over its lifetime. To do this, put as much money into a song's pre-release as possible. Generally, spending will follow this pattern:

- Spending $0–1 million will typically insure a gold record.
- Spending $1–2 million will usually lead to a platinum record.
- Spending $2–3 million will often result in a multi-platinum record.

The four pre-release categories do not offer the same boost per dollar spent. The larger categories, marketing and air play, are more expensive, but offer the largest amount of boost. When all categories are maxed, you can expect at least 100 percent boost in sales. To get the most pre-release boost for your dollar, max out spending in each category in this order:

1. Cost of goods first (up to +10% sales boost)
2. PR appearances second (up to +15% sales boost)
3. Marketing third (up to +35% sales boost)
4. Air play fourth (up to +40% sales boost)

INTERLUDE

Nothing in this business is guaranteed, but know that there is a random bonus added to all sales, regardless of spending. This random boost can be anywhere from 0 to 200 percent. Cross your fingers!

INTERLUDE

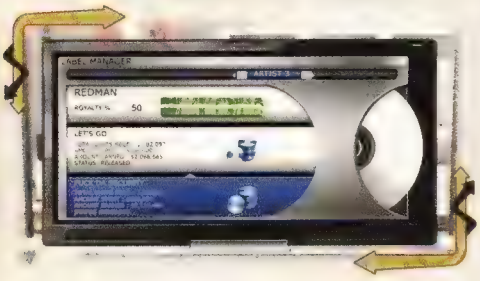
You don't have to release a song the instant it becomes available. If you don't have enough money to pre-release a song as well as you'd like, you can sit on it indefinitely until you've earned more cash. This will affect your artist's satisfaction level, but that trade-off is usually manageable by approving a few expensive requests.

A song will get an additional sales boost if your artist's satisfaction is higher than 50 at the time it is released. If his satisfaction is below 50, hold off on releasing until you can raise his satisfaction by approving some of his requests. The amount of boost you can get from a happy artist will offset most request amounts under $100,000, so don't be afraid to put down some cheddar.

STRATEGY 2—EARNING ICON STATUS

Earning Icon status not only unlocks the coveted Icon pendant, but it also marks the pinnacle of strategic label management. You must earn each status title to progress up the ladder. Consider these tricks if you're lookin' to become an Icon...

Getting Paid Gets Music Played

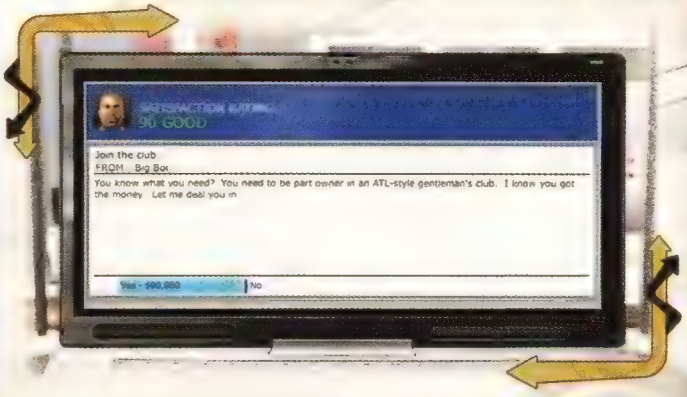


When signing artists, give them a high enough royalty to keep them happy and productive. The faster they go into the studio, the faster you will get tracks to release, which in turn will fatten the bank sooner. Give starting artists 41 percent royalty fees—that's the lowest percentage that will still bring the fastest production. Generally, artists will begin production as follows:

- Paying 20–30 percent royalty will begin production in three fight cycles.
- Paying 31–40 percent royalty will begin production in two fight cycles.
- Paying 41–50 percent royalty will begin production in one fight cycle.

Don't spend more than 10 Gs on yourself until you've released at least three songs. At that point, if you can afford it, you can spend up to $1 million more on yourself (for 100,000 style points), but keep your pre-release investments the top priority. Don't bother going after the 500,000 style point requirement until you've released all songs.

Except for Luda's first song, don't release any song with less than $1 million in pre-release spending. When you can afford it, put in $2 mill or more. Chances are you won't be able to afford this much until your third or fourth song becomes available, but if you get lucky with early sales, you may be able to add some extra juice to each consecutive release. You will need to put $2 million to $3 million in at least one song to get a multi-platinum hit, which you need to achieve hit-maker status.



Keep your artists' satisfaction scores at 50 or better until they have completed their second songs. You don't have to approve every request, but take advantage of the cheap ones (less than 20 Gs) and complete favor fights or rivalry fights, when presented with them, for free satisfaction boosts. Expensive requests (anything above 25 Gs) might not be worth the satisfaction boost unless you're really in a bind, so be judicious in granting them.

Once an artist has released his second song, cut him loose. You may feel like a greedy, heartless bastard, but spending more money on their requests after that won't get you anything in return. You can continue to boost their satisfaction if you want, and still become an Icon, but be aware of the financial trade-off.

Can't Buy Me Love

Brace yourself for what we're about to say. Ready? Don't waste time on girlfriends if you want an easy way to the top. They just cost money, and you will need as much of that as you can gather to maximize record sales and eventually buy enough style points. You can become an Icon with girlfriends, but it becomes a more complicated juggling act.

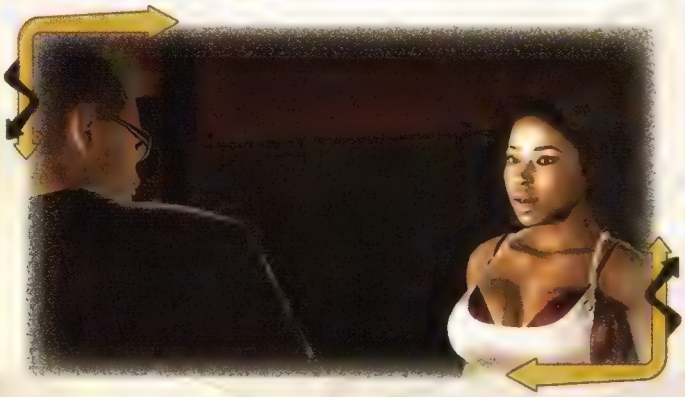
You gotta be able to give up certain things and keep your focus in the game. Otherwise, you're gonna get played.

The Style of Self

Once all seven songs are released (including Luda's), ideally with maximum pre-release spending, you can start spending money on yourself to crank up your style score to the required 500,000. Big-ticket items are the fastest way there, particularly the million-dollar pendants. You'll need to spend about $5 million on yourself to generate 500,000 style points.

You must do all of this before going downtown to talk with Carver. After that cutscene, things take a sharp left turn...

STRATEGY 3—GETTING FOUR GIRLFRIENDS



If you really wanna be a playa', try dating four girls at the same time. It's tricky and requires some special attention, but it is possible.

Start by getting at least 50–100K style points as early as possible. You will need to have at least enough style points to unlock another girlfriend before each introduction opportunity occurs. These opportunities all occur immediately after completing fights at the N.Y. Club, following these occasions:

- Immediately after helping Luda with Johnny Nunez in the beginning.
- Shortly after the cutscene introducing Troy Dollar.
- Shortly after you are promoted to the high-end Crib.
- Immediately after hitting the town with Luda.

You need to earn all four of these introduction opportunities, and to accept the lady's date invitation to add her to your girlfriend list. Be sure to have enough style to unlock additional girlfriends when these opportunities come up. When an opportunity presents itself, the girl with the highest style requirement you've met will approach you. For example, if you have 53,750 style points, Summer will approach you. If she has already approached you, then Mayra will approach, and so on down the list.

Potential Girlfriend	*Style Point Requirements*
Nina	1 Style
Liris	20,000 Style
Mayra	35,000 Style
Summer	50,000 Style
Christine	75,000 Style
Melyssa	100,000 Style

Once you have four girlfriends, all you need to do is keep them happy and hope they don't find out about each other. Keeping them happy is easy—approve their requests, and they should stay satisfied. Jealousy, however, is something that is harder to control. If a girlfriend is very happy (satisfaction above 85), she will not notice or worry about other girls you are seen with, and thus will not get jealous. If possible, keep all of their satisfaction scores above 85 by granting requests and accepting visits whenever offered.

If a girl spots you with another girl, however, she will send you a message and let you know. You will get two warning messages, but if she spots you a third time, she'll drop you faster than a lame beat. To increase your odds of skating through the game on the sly, you should only date girls with lower jealousy ratings:

Potential Girlfriend	*Jealousy Rating*
Nina	Less Jealous
Summer	Less Jealous
Christine	Less Jealous
Liris	Moderately Jealous
Melyssa	Moderately Jealous
Mayra	Crazy Jealous (avoid her, if dating four girls is your goal)

BUILDING A LABEL

The following section is a complete walkthrough of Build a Label mode. Although we'll be covering every fight including story and dynamic events, we're gonna leave certain details out to keep from ruining the plot for you. Moving the plot along and watching it develop is 50 percent of the fun, so trust us on this one, aight?

Though certain names will be changed to maintain the integrity of the story, the strategy will still apply. You just gotta trust us.

MEET CURTIS CARVER

Flashback to years past. You're out and about having a good time when some fool decides to be rude. You have to straighten him out, and in doing so, you get Curtis Carver's attention. Congratulations, you're in.

Story Fight 1—Big Herc

Enemy	*Location*	*Strategy*
Big Herc	The Club	This should be a relatively easy fight. Depending on what style you choose, fight a balanced fight and keep Big Herc on the defensive.

Story Fight 2—Luda's Stalker

Enemy	*Location*	*Strategy*
Stan	BET: 106 & Park	Stan the Stalker is one of the first few Street Kwon Do fighters you come across, so be careful. Use the studio venue to your advantage by keeping him in the left half of the studio, where the hazards can chop his health down in a hurry.

Story Fight 3—Paparazzi Punk

Enemy	*Location*	*Strategy*
Johnny Nunez	The Club	This is the first favor you do for Luda. And trust me, you want to make Luda happy, as he will soon be dropping a joint on the record biz. Bring the hurt down on Johnny Noon by using a block-and-counter attack.

Dynamic Fight 1—Fighting Fast Hal

Enemy	*Location*	*Strategy*
Fast Hal	The Block	One of your two potential artists is being hustled by a greedy promoter. Show him you mean business by stomping him out and cutting the artist loose of the shady promoter.

Dynamic Fight 2—Settling Beef

Enemy	*Location*	*Strategy*
Unsigned Artist	Gas Station	The other of your two potential artists is being hassled by a rival rapper. Do your boy a favor and settle this beef for him.

Story Fight 4—Decisions, decisions

Enemy	*Location*	*Strategy*
Johnny Nunez	The After Hours	Head to the club to sign a potential artist to the label, but look out: Johnny Nunez will probably try to ambush you when you get there.
Unsigned Rival	The Club	Go sign a deal with a potential artist, but get there early—Carver says a rival rapper is recruiting too.

MEET TROY DOLLAR

You've signed your first artist, released a record, and have made noise enough to reach Troy Dollar's side of town. Sooner than later, he comes wandering around kickin' up dust.

Story Fight 5—Sample This!

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Unsigned Artist	BET: 106 & Park	Someone has been sampling your unreleased tracks! Get that under control!

Story Fight 6—Building a Crew

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Unsigned Artist	The Club	Mr. Carver would like to sign an artist, but word is Troy Dollar is sending one of his boys to recruit. To make things worse, Troy's boy is an artist you passed up!

Story Fight 7—

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Stan	The Gas Station	Mr. Carver would like you to handle a stalker who is hounding another potential artist. You've seen him before; you know what to do.

(A1)

Even though the artist pool changes from session to session, Luda will always be your first artist. That makes whichever artist you sign first Artist 2. The second artist you sign is Artist 3, and so on. Get it?

Dynamic Fight 3—Fighting As...

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Artist 2	The Block	Artist 2 is about to scrap with a rival unsigned artist. Fight as your boy and handle your business. This fight will be a handful. The Block's hazards can quickly chop you up. Stay near the center of the venue and fight smart.

Story Fight 8—More Decisions

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Unsigned Artist	BET: 106 & Park	Hit the studio to sign a potential artist to the label. If Troy send a goon to get in your way, deal with him before your boy gets there.
Unsigned Artist	The Roof	Fly out to sign a potential artist to the label. But be careful, Troy might send one of his busta's to slow you down. Use the helicopter blade in this level to cause major damage.

BRICK BY BRICK...

You could build a home one brick at a time. Building a label is no different. These artists are your bricks, and with a third artist on the label, you've laid the foundation for an empire.

Story Fight 9—120 Bars

Enemy	Location	Notes
Unsigned Artist	The Gas Station	Wink says a rival artist is going to diss Carver with 120 bars of beef. Convince him not to, but be careful—he's one of Troy's favorites.

Story Fight 10—Blast from the Past

Enemy	Location	Notes
Big Herc	The Club	Follow up on Wink's tip about more stolen samples. He thinks Big Herc (remember him?) might be the culprit and suggests you straighten him out.

MEET SPEED

While you're out and about with Carver, some strange fool offers to buy you a drink. Carver, smart to the game, knows better than to accept. Turns out the friendly guy wasn't so friendly...

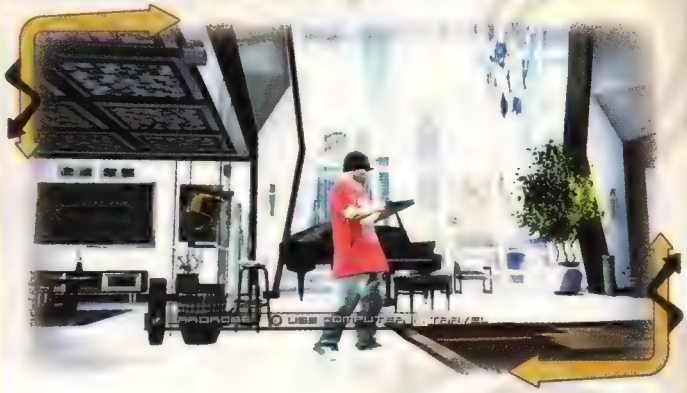
Dynamic Fight 4—Fast Hal part 2

Enemy	Location	Notes
Fast Hal	The Block	One of your artist's friends is being hassled by the same shady promoter. This guy gets around. Remind him why he shouldn't mess with your boys...or their friends.

Story Fight 11—Rumble at Troy's

Enemy	Location	Notes
Surprise Enemy	Executive Suite	When you go down to Troy's to see what's up, he's got some startling news for you. You got some business to take care of. Consider it cleaning house.

NEW CRIB!



After manhandling that traitorous Wink, you get a new Crib where you can spread your wings. Everything you need is there. Travel, PC, Wardrobe...they just look much nicer now. Congratulations! You're making the rise.

Dynamic Fight 5—Straightening Out Crooked 5-0

Enemy	Location	Notes
Boyd	The Gas Station	Word is one of your boys is being harassed by a corrupt cop named Boyd. This is your first meeting with Boyd, a Black Panther fighter. Keep Boyd from keeping a rhythm. Black Panther fighters are very well balanced, so be careful.

Story Fight 12—He Just Don't Learn

Enemy	Location	Notes
Fast Hal	BET: 106 & Park	Mr. Carver would like to sign another artist on the label. Help him by handling Fast Hal for him.

Story Fight 13—Running Interference

Enemy	Location	Notes
Unsigned Artist	The Club	Troy is after a potential artist for his label, and sent one of his boys out to recruit. Stop Troy's man in his tracks so Mr. Carver can get a word with the potential artist in private.

Story Fight 14—Pick a Playa'

Enemy	Location	Notes
Unsigned Artist	The After Hours	Head out to sign a potential artist to the label and be ready to deal with any rivals running interference for Troy.
Unsigned Artist	The Roof	Fly to L.A. and sign a potential artist to a deal. Keep your eyes open—one of Troy's fools might be looking to settle up for the way you embarrassed him earlier.

Story Fight 15—Ambush!

Enemy	Location	Notes
Unsigned Artist	Executive Suite	Troy invited one of your boys to his office to meet with one of his producers, but it could be a trap. Fight as your boy and deal with any trouble.

Story Fights 16 and 17—Smoothing Things Out

Enemy	Location	Notes
Boyd	The Block	Go talk with the off-duty cop your boy has been beefing with and try to smooth things out. This time you're not dealing with Boyd as one of your artists, but you're dealing with him first hand. Boyd won't play around with you, so don't give him slack. Stay on him and fight him hard and fast. Use short combos and well-timed throws to whittle him down.
Unsigned Artist	The Penthouse	Sounds like an unsigned artist is pretty upset that you didn't sign him to the label. Invite him over and try to smooth things out.

You're a player on the rise! You gotta start expecting the unexpected. Soon after you sign another artist to the label, a ghost from your past shows up. This ghost, however, is a welcome haunting.

While scrapping at the Penthouse, your Crib gets all tore up. No worries though, Carver's still got your old apartment on standby for you.

Dynamic Fight 6—Dealing with a Diss

Enemy	Location	Notes
Unsigned Artist	The Club	A rival artist dissed one of your boys on a mix tape and he'd like you to deal with it for him. Catch up with the rival artist at the studio.

Story Fight 18—No Time to Celebrate

Enemy	Location	Notes
Unsigned Artist	The Club	Meet Luda at the Club, but watch out for a rival artist—he wants another shot at you.

MEET WHEATLY

After settling things at the Club, you're intercepted by another one of N.Y.C.'s finest. Officer Wheatly wasn't too pleased with how you snubbed his boy Greer earlier, so he decided to make his own impression.

Dynamic Fight 7—Settle Things Up

Enemy	Location	Notes
Unsigned Artist	The Gas Station	Troy sent one of his men out to mess with your boy. Fight as your boy and deal with that nonsense.

Story Fight 19—Get Bent...Cops

Enemy	Location	Notes
Boyd	BET: 106 & Park	Head to the studio and deal with whoever is shadowing one of your boys. It might be Greer or one of Wheatley's other bent cops. This is another meeting with Boyd that will end in bloodshed. Deal with him just the same as you did last time.

Story Fight 20—Top Dog

Enemy	Location	Notes
Dae Dae	The After Hours	Head to the awards, but watch out for Dae Dae—he's looking to settle up for what your boy did to Troy's office. One of Dae Dae's default songs is "Tell Me When to Go." That is a particularly dangerous song to fight to, so stay defensive.

Story Fight 21—Fight the Powers That Be!

Enemy	Location	Notes
Greer	The Block	Sounds like the cops are after one of your artists on trumped-up charges. Fight as your artist and don't make it easy on 'em. Greer's Ghetto Blaster technique is pretty well balanced, so stay on your toes. Use the big beats in the track to maximize damage while maintaining a safe distance from Greer's attacks.

PLATINUM VISITS

After settling things with Greer, Platinum comes over to your crib with some distressing news. It seems things aren't always what they seem, young buck. You really better watch your back now.

Story Fight 22 and 23—Get Your Boy's Back

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Unsigned Artist	The Roof	Troy sent one of his boys over to rough up one of your artists. Fight as your artist and defend yourself.
Unsigned Artist	The After Hours	Word is a rival artist wants revenge on your boy. Get to the club and deal with him before your boy gets there.

Story Fight 24—Trying to Make Things Right

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Dae Dae	The Penthouse	Invite Dae Dae over to talk things out like grown men, assuming he's capable of that.... Soon you find out he's not, and have to take matters into your own hands again. This time, though, he's on your turf. Use your default song and environment to waste Dae Dae.

Story Fight 25—A Favor for Carver

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Big Herc	The Block	Call Tiny back and get up on this favor Mr. Carver needs from you. Turns out, you gotta manhandle Big Herc again. He hasn't changed much since last time, so just stay true to your style and you should be good.

SAY GOODBYE TO CARVER

Back to the present. Carver is spitting some mad wisdom at you when the unthinkable happens. Much like other tragic hip-hop figures, he is gunned down on the streets. This time, however, the cops do have a suspect.

Story Fight 26—No Time for Mourning

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Greer	The Penthouse	You try to run, but before you can Greer bursts through your door and starts kicking up dust. Stomp his teeth in and get moving!

MEET GOOCH!

Things need to chill. That's what your boy Gooch is for. He can help you get things straightened out. Between him and Platinum, your back is covered...you hope.

411

After you meet with Gooch and Platinum, things take a slight turn. Suffice it to say that you won't be doing as many favors as you once did.

Story Fights 27 and 28—On the Hunt for Answers

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Unsigned Artist	The Club	Fight as Gooch and ride on one of his artists as payback. Get information on what's the dealio.
Unsigned Artist	The After Hours	Time to take it to Troy's yard—hit his club in L.A. and bring down the house.

CONFRONT DOLLAR

You've raised enough ruckus to get Troy Dollar's attention, but to get some real answers, you'll have to take the interrogation directly to him. Confront Troy at his office and....

Story Fight 29—On the Hunt for Answers

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Troy Dollar	Executive Suite	The fight with Troy Dollar is no walk in the park. Troy is an adept Jah Breaka fighter with speed, smarts, and home field advantage. Stay away from the hazards and block all of his throwing attempts.

SCORE SETTLED?

Just when you thought things were over, it goes from bad to worse. Not to worry though, Gooch's got your back. Trust in him...because there is no one else you *can* trust.

Story Fight 30—Back in the Game

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Unsigned Artist	The Block	Fight as Gooch and persuade an unsigned artist to give you a disc of his latest material, by any means necessary.

Story Fight 31—Earning Respect

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Wink	The Club	Take those tracks to the Club and find Wink. See if it can buy you an appointment with the new head of the label.

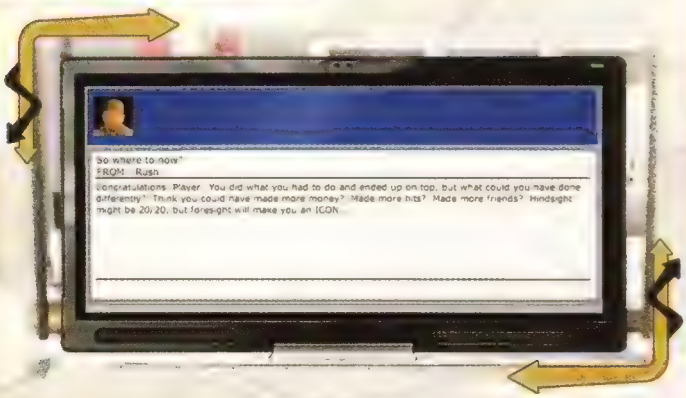
Story Fight 32—Welcome Back

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Surprise Enemy	Executive Suite	Lo and behold, the new head of the label has some unexpected business partners. Deal with the business partner's muscle just as you dealt with him before.

Story Fights 33 and 34—On the Hunt for Answers

Enemy	*Location*	*Notes*
Final Boss	The Roof	After you take out his muscle, the CEO's business partner steps up. It's about time you stepped toe to toe with him. You've been waiting for this.
Final Boss	The Roof	You dropped him once, and you can do it again. Besides, after the brief interlude between this fight and your last, you should have plenty of motivation to wreck shop.

ONE FINAL MOVE



After you settle up with the new heads of the label, you get one last chance to complete your look, fighting style, and theme song. Choose wisely, this is the final move in your career.

THE VAULT

UNLOCKABLES AND XBOX 360 ACHIEVEMENTS

This chapter covers everything you need to know to unlock all the fighting styles and characters, and all Xbox 360 Achievements.

UNLOCK ALL GEAR AND ACCESSORIES

Package Name	*Items*	*Area*	*How To*
Urban and Stylish	8732, Ecko, Encye, Live Mechanics, Phat Farm, Roca Wear, South Pole, and Zoo York	Build a Label	Unlock all fighting styles.
Casual and Classy	Adidas, Avirex, Brand Jordan, Nike, LRG, Puma, and Sean Jean	Build a Label	Release 5 platinum albums.
Bling Package	Avianne and the Simmons Jewelry Company	Build a Label	Get $5 million in the bankbook.

AWARD CHAINS

Chain Name	*Area*	*How To*
Ladies' Man	Build a Label	Have four satisfied girlfriends simultaneously.
Icon	Build a Label	Unlock all fighting styles, get $5 million in the bankbook, and release 5 platinum albums.
Time Served	Online	Play 100 total online ranked matches.
Paid Your Dues	Online	Play 500 total online ranked matches.
Recognize Game	Online	Play 1,000 total online ranked matches.
Hot Streak	Online	Win 10 consecutive online ranked matches.
On Fire	Online	Win 20 consecutive online ranked matches.
Blazin'	Online	Win 30 consecutive online ranked matches.
Certified Soldier	Online	Win 25 ranked matches.
Certified Vet	Online	Win 100 ranked matches.
Certified Baller	Online	Win 250 ranked matches.
Certified Gangsta'	Online	Win 500 ranked matches.
Certified Bastard	Online	Win 1,000 ranked matches.
Icon	Online	Get on the Top 100 online leaderboard.

UNLOCKABLE BRAWLERS

Brawler	*How To*
Big Herc	After defeated in Build a Label mode.
Boyd	After defeated in Build a Label mode.
Dae Dae	After defeated in Build a Label mode.
Dr. Chang	After plastic surgery.
Fast Hal, the Promoter	After defeated in Build a Label mode.
Fat Joe	At the Press Start screen press B, A, RT, LT, Y for Xbox 360 or ●, ⇧, ⇨, ⇦, ■ for PLAYSTATION®3.

Brawler	How To
Greer	After defeated in Build a Label mode.
Johnny Nunez	After defeated in Build a Label mode.
Method Man/Gooch	After fighting as Gooch in Build a Label mode.
Stan the Stalker	After defeated in Build a Label mode.
Sticky Fingaz/Wink	After defeated in Build a Label mode.
Troy Dollar	After defeated in Build a Label mode.
Wheatly	After defeated in Build a Label mode.

You don't gotta wait for the plastic surgery instance to unlock Dr. Chang. At the Start screen, press ⇩, ■, ⇨ on PLAYSTATION®3.

By using the code to unlock Fat Joe, you also unlock his track "Make it Rain."

UNLOCKABLE TRACKS

Fighting Style	How to on Xbox 360	How to on PLAYSTATION®3
"It's Going Down" by Yung Joc	At the Press Start screen press ⇩, B, A, ⇨.	At the Press Start screen press ⇩, ●, ×, ⇨.
"Make it Rain" by Fat Joe	At the Press Start screen press B, ⇧, ⇨, ⇦, Y.	At the Press Start screen press ●, ⇧, ⇨, ⇦, ■.

UNLOCKABLE FIGHTING STYLES

Fighting Style	How To
Black Panther	Attain producer status in Build a Label mode.
Muay Fly	Attain hit maker status in Build a Label mode.
Beatboxer	Attain mogul status in Build a Label mode.
Jah Breaka	Attain icon status in Build a Label mode.

XBOX 360 ACHIEVEMENTS

Name	Points	Description
The Big Burn	15	Solo Hard or Ranked: Torch your opponent in the flaming gas pump.
Workin' at the Car Wash	10	Solo Hard or Ranked: Clean up your opponent with the Car Wash brush.
Too Loud, Too Old	10	Solo Hard or Ranked: Defeat your opponent by using the speaker blast at the Club.

Name	Points	Description
Hit the Lights	15	Solo Hard or Ranked: Use the light wall at the club until it's lights-out.
It's the Amps	10	Solo Hard or Ranked: Blow your opponent away with the electrified car on the Block.
Joy Riding	15	Solo Hard or Ranked: End the fight with the lowrider impact on the Block.
Feel the Power	10	Solo Hard or Ranked: End a fight at the TV studio with an electrifying experience for your opponent.
Heads Up	15	Solo Hard or Ranked: Knock your opponent out with the swinging light rig.
Window of Opportunity	15	Solo Hard or Ranked: Throw your opponent out of the window at the Penthouse.
Marshmallows	10	Solo Hard or Ranked: Use the fireplace in the Penthouse to finish off your opponent.
Going Down	15	Solo Hard or Ranked: Throw your opponent into the elevator shaft in the Office.
Killer Sound System	10	Solo Hard or Ranked: Bring your opponent's health to zero with volume at 11 at the Office.
Smacked Down	15	Solo Hard or Ranked: Use the helicopter tail whip as your finishing move.
Caution: Wet Floor	10	Solo Hard or Ranked: Shock your opponent to victory on the Roof.
Look but Don't Touch	25	Solo Hard or Ranked: Get one of the dancers to defeat your opponent.
My Mixtape	25	Play your "DEF JAM: ICON" saved playlist in My Soundtrack.
Troy's Trophies	50	Be Troy Dollar and protect your trophies while fighting a solo match.
Brother's Store	50	Be Dr. Chang and protect your brother's convenience store during a solo match.
Reversals Only	50	Win a solo Beatings with Bass match using only reversals on Hard.
Directional Attacks Only	50	Win a solo Beatings with Bass match using only directional attacks on Hard.
Bling	5	Have a record go gold in Build a Label.
Bling Bling	10	Have a record go platinum in Build a Label.
KaChing Bling	15	Have a record go multiplatinum in Build a Label.
BMF	100	Complete Build a Label mode on Hard difficulty level.
Producing Mogul	10	Release 6 songs in Build a Label.
Top of the Charts	10	Have an album reach No. 1 on the charts.
Fashion Icon	25	Reach the maximum amount of style in Build a Label.
Ladies' Man	35	Have 4 satisfied girlfriends simultaneously in Build a Label mode.
Protect Your Crib	50	Complete a fight without the glass wall breaking in your crib in Build a Label.
Represent Yourself	5	Change your signature.
Getting Hot	15	Ranked: Win 5 online fights in a row.
Critical Beat Down	50	Ranked: Win 15 online fights in a row.
Get Your Mode On	20	Ranked: Achieve 50 online wins.
Rollin'	50	Ranked: Achieve 100 online wins.
Ornery Bastard	100	Ranked: Achieve 200 online wins.
Domination	25	Ranked: Have your taunt tag appear on your dominated opponent's screen.
Straight Clownin'	50	Win a ranked match with 50 total taunts.

REAL TALK WITH KEVIN LILES

There are many great minds behind *DEF JAM: ICON*, but only one of them is responsible for Def Jam Records' amazing success. After getting our hands on *DEF JAM: ICON*, we got some time with Kevin Liles. Here's our conversation:

Prima Games: *How is it that you managed to rise from an intern to your current position? That's an amazing feat.*

Kevin Liles: I always worked hard and dreamed big. I never took failure personally and made sure to learn from all mistakes. I always asked "why," and slept with one eye open. I followed the rules that are outlined in my book *Make It Happen*. But the ones that were most important in my career were these: Rule No. 1, Find Your Will. I always knew that the business of music was my *will*. Rule No. 5, Play Your Position. No job was ever too small. Everything was a learning experience on the path to success. I played my position. Rule No. 10, Flex Purpose, Not Power. I try to always lead by example and remember everything I learned along the way.

PG: *DEF JAM: ICON takes a turn toward building an empire rather than just fighting. What was the driving force behind the change?*

KL: At Def Jam Interactive, we pride ourselves in being the first to market. It was one thing to be the first hip-hop conceptualized game, but it's a whole other story to really infuse hip-hop into gameplay. We took actual scenarios that happen in our everyday life and provided gamers the opportunity to be entrepreneurial in DEF JAM: ICON. Kudo and the team at EA Chicago shared our vision, and together we created another first. *You* too can rise from intern to president/CEO....

PG: *You're featured very prominently in the game as Curtis Carver. Was it important to you that the Carver character have certain character or personality traits?*

KL: Carver is the inspiration to the culture. He is the rags-to-riches story with morals and values. He never forgets where he came from, and at the same time, pushes every day for the culture to see everything that's happening around them. He never judged a book by its cover—he read the whole book.

PG: *How are you like or unlike Carver?*

KL: Carver was created not only in my image but with my values. Carver is a man's man—which I aim to be every day. Like myself, Carver would never ask anyone to do something that he wouldn't do himself. He's opportunistic, hard-working, always looking for every chance to listen and learn—just like myself. My early life in the streets of Baltimore, and Carver's early life in the streets of *Icon* are similar. We both never wanted anything from anyone else and worked hard to make it happen for ourselves.

PG: *Carver's mentor in the game is Rush, a character played by Russell Simmons. How has Simmons been an influence on you?*

KL: Russell is not only the Godfather of hip-hop, he's a mentor, a friend, and an inspiration to all young people who choose not to be average. He's the template for those who wake up every day and push the envelope to be the best they can be—to be creative, have vision, shed light on that vision, and work hard every day to bring that vision into fruition.

PG: *Redman and Method are back again, as are some of the other rappers from previous Def Jam titles. What's the process like for picking the roster of fighters?*

KL: I have to believe that you will kick some ass. Red would kick his own ass. The first time I met Meth [he had] a razor in his mouth—he still carries it now. You saw Big Boi and T.I. in ATL—I believed them.

PG: *How do you think DEF JAM: ICON portrays the music industry? I mean, we all know it's a game, but sometimes you gotta wonder where the influence comes from, y'know?*

KL: It doesn't portray the industry. It portrays the struggle and come-up of any individual who wants to succeed—from the street corner to the corner office. It's all about being an entrepreneur. Loving what you do, being successful at it, and changing lives around you.

PG: *Hip-hop culture has become so predominant in fashion, art, television, film, and now, apparently, video games. What do you think is the most important aspect of hip-hop culture that you would like people to recognize?*

KL: I would like people to recognize that we are not an industry based on what school you went to or how much money your family has. We are an industry based on hard work, guts, will, and passion. We defy the historical limitations that have been placed on hip-hop throughout conception. Remember that hip-hop was supposed to be a passing fad. Critics insisted that it would die out 20 years ago.

What we do know now is that hip-hop *is* pop culture. It's become a way of life for the mainstream worldwide. It lives in every household in the world, spanning all age demos, socioeconomic status, and every other category they try to lump us into.

PG: *Rumor has it, you're no stranger to the turntables. You used to DJ back in the day in Baltimore, right? Can you tell us a little bit about your time with Numarx and your early music career?*

KL: Until 2001, I had turntables in my office. I'm a DJ at heart. I believe it all starts with the DJ. I had the opportunity to be a part of a crew in Baltimore that helped change my life. If it wasn't for hip-hop and Numarx, I would probably be another statistic in Baltimore.

PG: *You've conquered the music industry, become a hip-hop icon, written a book, and were recently immortalized in a video game. What could possibly be next?*

KL: I don't take what has been given to me lightly. I chose not to make excuses, but instead make it happen for myself. I chose to embrace the theory of "T.E.A.M.": Together Everyone Achieves More. I've had the opportunity to work with some of the greatest talent, artists, and executives to ever live. There's only one person who knows what's next for me. I'll continue to follow him and continue to serve.

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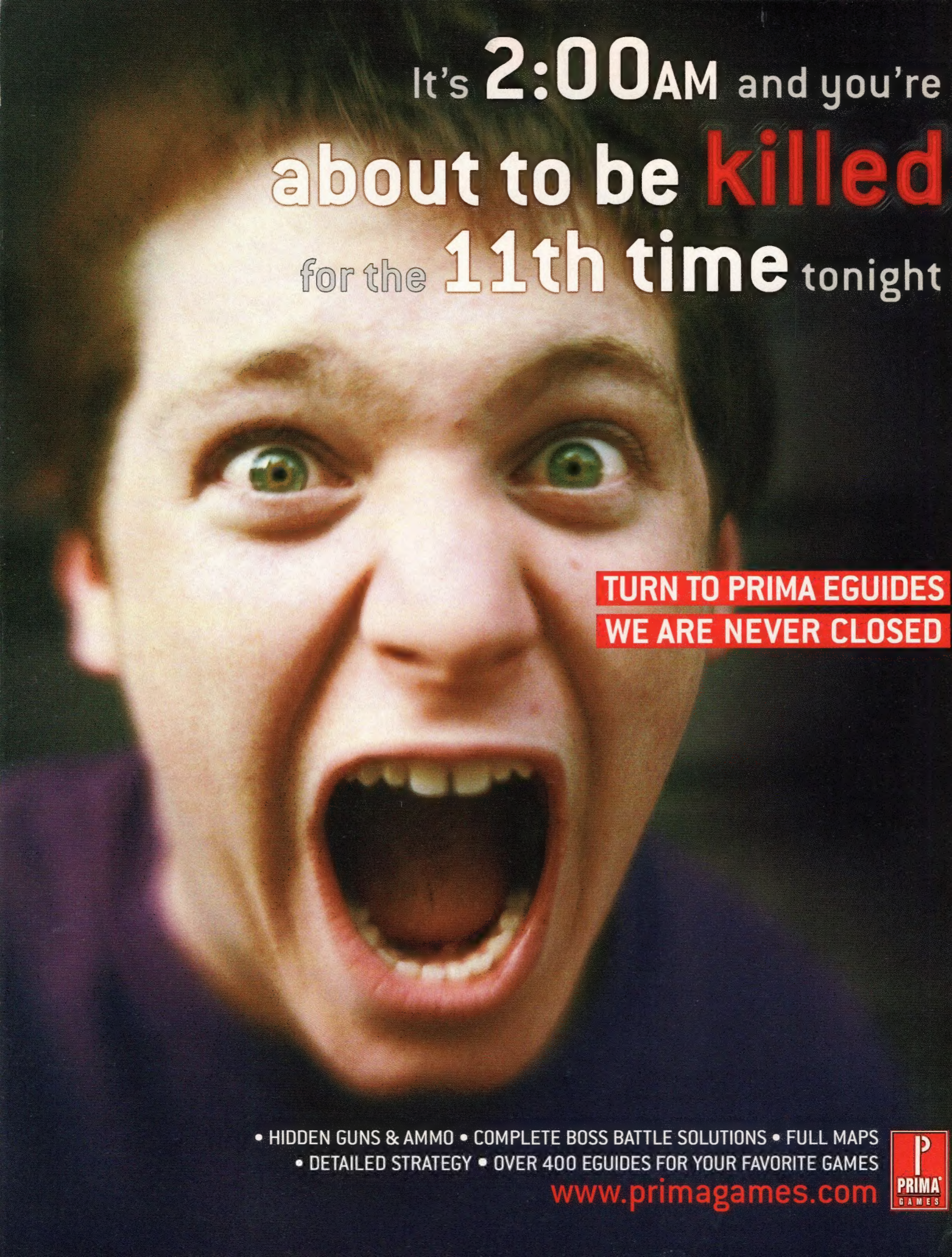
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Written by Fernando Bueno

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ISBN 0-7615-5624-9

U.S. $16.99 Can. $21.95 U.K. £12.99

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